# ASCENSION OF AWARENESS

**Foundational Chapters, and Cautions against Intellectual Pitfalls**


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**Translated by:**

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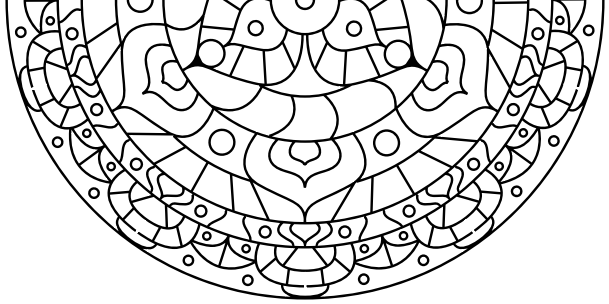
*In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.*



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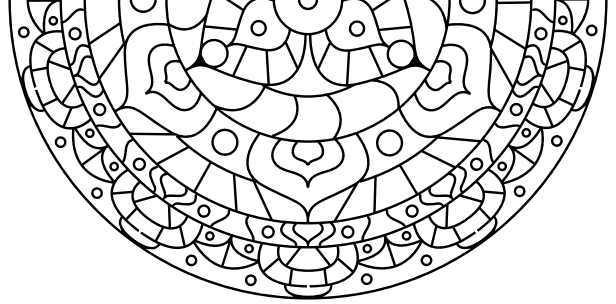


# Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to manifest it over all religion, and sufficient is Allah as a Witness. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, and that He is One, without a partner, I acknowledge Him and His unity. And I bear witness that our prophet Muhammad is His servant and messenger, may Allah exalt him, his family, his companions, and grant them peace abundantly.

In the shadow of the intensified creedal invasion and severe intellectual conflict, there is no substitute to vigilant immunity and prudent awareness. Indeed, among the obligatory duties today on everyone capable is the effort to remind and warn, to offer advice, and to spread awareness; as it is no secret that many of the Muslim youth, both boys and girls, have become targets for the arrows of Allah's enemies. They shower them - morning and evening - with a barrage of doubts. And those who do not arm themselves with a robust shield of knowledge and piety, doubts gnaw at them, and desires toy with them.

In an atmosphere clouded with gloom, it is imperative that the sensible walk by light, guidance, and unmistakable evidence; otherwise, how great is their loss!

The sweeping currents of desires and the tumultuous waves of doubts only drown "the light-weighted," whereas the firmly rooted - by the grace of Allah - remain steadfast, unshaken. {So be patient. Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth, and let not those who do not have certainty in faith discourage you} *[Al-Rum: 60]*.

The firmly grounded in knowledge and faith are certain that decorated misguidance is but a mirage, and that the truth is clear and manifest. The religion of Allah is dominant and supported without doubt, and this is but a trial {to test which of you is best in deed} *[Al-Mulk: 2]*, and {that Allah may purify the wicked from the good} *[Al-Anfal: 37]*, and Allah is predominant over His affair.

***The truth, victorious and refined, stands tall,***

***Do not marvel at its strength or gall.***

***For such is the path, tender and divine,***

***marked by the grace of the Most Merciful, a line.***

Thus, in the pages before you, dear reader, are chapters from creedal discussions and intellectual paths that are in dire need of foundational treatment, and a clarification of the correct stance on "hot topics" that have seen much debate and response, along with alerts to intellectual pitfalls, reprehensible doctrines, and logical fallacies(1).

---

*(1) Origin of This Book:*

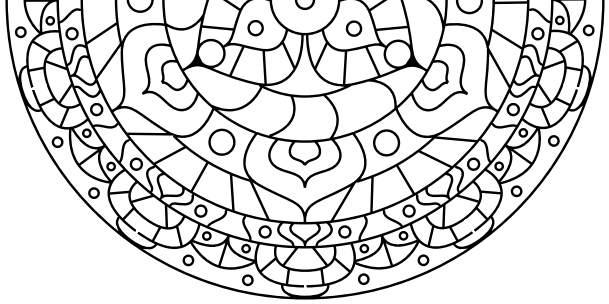
These are radio episodes that I aired in the year (1440 AH) in the program " Awareness" on the Quran Radio in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, accompanied by the brilliant presenter: Mr. Abdullah Al-Zahrani - may Allah make him successful - and they were published on the network.

And I ask Allah, the Most High to make it beneficial for His servants and accepted by Him, for He is Near and Responding.

=Then, when some of the virtuous people urged me to put them in a book so that their benefit would be widespread, Allah opened my chest for this; so, I sought His help, the Exalted, and then reviewed them and modified them to be consistent with reading, not listening, while taking into account brevity, ease of expression, and clarity of sentences. I made each episode - of the broadcasted episodes - in a chapter.

I point out that the scientific material here - like any book - is a mixture of what Allah has opened to His poor servant to His mercy, and what I have benefited from others - from the past and the present - where I collected its scattered parts from scientific sources, websites, and others. It did not cross my mind at the time that those episodes would turn into written papers; Therefore, I did not care to document the references and document the information. When my attention was directed to other things it was very difficult for me to go through a new round of documentation according to what the scientific research methodology requires; so I sufficed with this indication, which I hope will pave the way for me to apologize, hoping that Allah will magnify the reward for the people of knowledge from whom I benefited from their knowledge, and I did not address them directly, seeking refuge in Him, the Exalted, from being filled with what I was not given.

I also do not forget to thank my dear brother Dr. Saud bin Uwaidh al-Aufi for his help in publishing this book, may Allah reward him with good.



# Chapter One:
# The Challenges Facing the Youth

All praise is due to Allah, and may Allah exalt and send peace to the Messenger of Allah, his family, his companions, and those who follow him.

## What is Awareness?

In the language, awareness means to gather and to preserve, as indicated in the verse: {And he gathered and retained} *[Al-Ma'arij: 18]*, and in another: {And it was heard by an attentive ear} *[Al-Haqah: 12]*. The meaning then evolved to denote understanding and perception, eventually signifying a deeper notion, which is the intent of the title of this book: the correct perception of things, comprehending their reality, and controlling the course of knowledge and reasoning. Thus, a person of awareness distinguishes between truth and falsehood, and right from wrong.

Another way to express this could be to say: Awareness is insight, or penetrating vision, or a profound understanding of events, possibilities, challenges, and obligations. Awareness is more precise than mere general understanding; it is a deep understanding,

coupled with experience with things, accuracy in contemplating them, and knowing their condition.

## Our Need for Awareness

In this era, we live in a unique state, characterized by an amazing flow of information, entering people's lives through two wide windows: satellite and internet. This has led to a great universal cultural overlap, placing humans in this reality under tremendous pressure, akin to a student in a classroom facing twenty professors, all explaining different scientific subjects at the same time!

Without proper awareness accompanying the dense offering of cultural products regarding self, reality, and requirements, this will be a factor of disturbance and confusion in beliefs, ideas, and judgments. It will lead us into a cultural trial, doctrinal imbalance, and ethical laxity. Therefore, we are in dire need of awareness, indeed, of mature awareness, acting as a filter for this vast number of ideas, information, and images; so, we may then discern the correct and embrace it, and recognize the false and avoid it.

This situation does not stop at the massive cultural and informational influx causing dispersion and confusion; the matter is more significant. The enemies of Allah have adeptly used this reality to launch a concentrated ideological and cultural invasion targeting Muslim sons and daughters everywhere. The goal is twofold: to lead these Muslims away from their religion, making them disbelievers after their belief—a task undertaken by atheists, secularists, missionaries, and others—and secondly, to alter the Islamic concepts in the hearts of Muslims, presenting erroneous notions that do not align with what our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ brought. These misconceptions may lean towards extremism or

leniency, and this task may be taken up by people from within our ranks, speaking our languages.

In summary, there is a significant problem that warrants every effort to remedy and counteract its effects. A torrential flow of ideological and intellectual currents invades our very homes, addressing all segments of society, especially the youth, both male and female. It resembles a widespread, deadly virus descending from space or hunted through the network, differing in quantity and quality from any previous ideological threat. Those who are not protected against it are at imminent risk of harm.

I am not speaking of imagination; we have seen, heard, and known many examples. We have seen and heard of individuals killing their fathers, mothers, or cousins in the name of Islam, and we have seen those who declare their atheism, convert to Christianity, or mock the Sharia openly among the Muslims!

The situation is serious and real!

## Characteristics of the Contemporary Ideological and Intellectual Invasion

The contemporary ideological and intellectual invasion is characterized by features, the most important of which I summarize in seven traits:

**The first:** The abundance of promoted currents, doubts, and ideas. A wide spectrum of beliefs and tendencies confidently presents itself as the truth, aiming, in reality, to strike at the pure creed and sound morals. The doubts raised today encompass everything, and by "everything," I precisely mean that: the existence of Allah, His lordship, His divinity, the prophecy of our Prophet Muhammad

ﷺ his Hadith, predestination, the Quran, rulings, ethics, etc. This targeting is neither random nor casual; it is focused and studied.

**The second**: The use of various means—audio, written, visual—is prevalent. There are websites, especially social media platforms, satellite channels, books, novels, magazines, and more. Today, the internet and social media largely dominate thought and culture, with almost all cultural products circulating around them. Indeed, the proponents of these currents have mastered the exploitation of every medium, adapting it to disseminate their ideas. Hence, we find cultural, documentary, scientific, and educational channels that adopt atheistic theories, even though they enter most Muslim homes. Foreign films produced by international production companies, originally intended for entertainment, intersperse their content with what Allah has forbidden, yet they convey hidden atheistic messages. Even some video games have not escaped from broadcasting these messages.

This represents a new reality; things were not like this in the past. Previously, the formats for presenting ideas were limited, mostly to books or possibly radio, and generally, it was those who sought out these ideas who would find these cultural products, not the oblivious. Thus, the impact was limited, unlike today, where the means actively pursue people, even those unaware of them. We note that these means are characterized by diversity and abundance, by novelty—each new thing brings its allure—by attractiveness, and by ease of access, all of which magnify their impact.

**The third:** What distinguishes this contemporary discourse is the variety of approaches, including appeals to the intellect, the emotions, raising philosophical or applied scientific doubts, distorting the truth, and confusing with ambiguities, unlike the past where the discourse was mostly philosophical and elitist.

**The fourth:** Today's discourse addresses all demographics, adeptly speaking to adults and children, males and females, in almost all languages; hence, the scope of impact is also significant, unlike in the past. Previously, we did not hear about children's stories—colorful and beautiful—broadcasting atheistic poisons suitable for children's minds, but today, this exists. Previously, there was no series of atheistic pamphlets aimed at those of limited intelligence!

In the past, the translation movement of outputs from misguided currents was weak. Today, however, there hardly remains a famous atheistic book that has not been translated into Arabic and published for free on the internet. Unfortunately, this is countered by a weakness in immunization and treatment programs, both in quantity and quality.

**The fifth:** There is a new reality called family estrangement or familial isolation, a phenomenon widespread in many Muslim societies. Previously, family relationships were usually strong, supervision over children and youth was present, and a sense of awareness and concern for each member within the family was evident. Families used to discuss and dialogue openly, confronting each other with any intellectual problems, doubts, or similar issues. The family relationship used to be warm and strong to a significant extent. But is the state of the family the same today? I believe everyone realizes what the situation has become! Today, the family, in many cases, has become multiple independent worlds under one roof! Meaning, each individual now has their private world; they have their mobile or personal computer, creating their own virtual world, with no oversight or accountability. Everyone, including some parents, is preoccupied with themselves, and everyone is distracted from others. This reality has resulted in

many young men and women becoming easy prey for those with ulterior motives, who are adept at hunting their prey.

**The sixth:** The absence of a reference point among many young men and women; one may not know where to turn if they encounter a doubt or face a perplexing issue. Many of them cannot differentiate between a reliable and an unreliable source of information. Today, everyone speaks and asserts their own truths, and there are listeners for every voice. In the past, the trusted reference was clear and undisputed.

**The seventh:** Our contemporary reality also suffers from a weakness in recognizing the magnitude of the problem in the Muslim intellectual arena. Some people today are unaware of the severity of the situation, either due to their distance from it or their preoccupations. Thus, the lethal diseases of doubt can devastate those around them while they remain oblivious. They might even be affected without realizing it, and possibly wake up too late to a regrettable reality concerning themselves or their family, after it's too late. Therefore, the closer a person is to their environment, with awareness and precise observation—not paranoia or mistrust—the more likely they are to withstand the efforts of enemies. This represents the ultimate form of love for one's kin and the epitome of compassion towards them.

One of the most key areas to focus on is the intellectual foundations from which other ideas branch off. Deviation in thought often results from a misunderstanding of these foundations, and those who are misguided typically infiltrate through manipulation of these principles. Therefore, those who understand these foundations well and control them firmly will be safe, by the grace of Allah, from the impact of these sweeping intellectual doubts.

We primarily address the youth here, for the youth of this era need to know the truth through convincing methods, not indoctrination. That is, they should know the truth along with its evidence. Everyone needs this: those whose minds are muddled or who have been exposed to some doubts, and even those who are well, so they may be protected, by the grace of Allah, from the misleading concepts they might encounter one day, and so they can engage effectively in dialogue with those in need of guidance to the straight path. These topics should not be taken lightly.

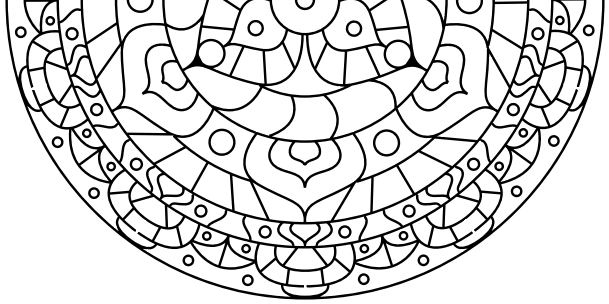
In this era, there is a necessity to build our faith on solid, correct foundations that can withstand the waves of doubt. Take these matters seriously. What follows in the upcoming pages will clarify the most important foundations according to the correct methodology, consistent with the authentic transmitted evidence and clear rationality, striving, by the will of Allah, to combine ease of presentation with the depth of content.

Before I conclude, it's important to highlight a crucial point:

The discussion of contemporary ideological and intellectual deviation needs to be approached with precision, gentleness, and objectivity. This is because some individuals may exaggerate their perceptions or descriptions and could become overwhelmed, viewing the world as bleak once they delve into this topic. Such an approach is neither desired nor acceptable. Thankfully, the prevalence of good is overwhelming, and the presence of a problem is concerning, not its dominance. That a small minority is affected should motivate us to diligently seek remedies, not to despair or become demoralized. The religion belongs to Allah, the Almighty, and it is assured of His support and victory.

Today, we stand on the battlefield of jihad in defense of the faith, a duty incumbent upon everyone: men and women, educators

and media professionals, imams and preachers, intellectuals and thinkers, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, leaders and followers alike. Islam is the reason for our existence, the purpose of our survival, and the most significant cause in our lives. Let us roll up our sleeves in its defense, as Allah commands, {O you who have believed, be supporters of Allah} *[Al-Saff: 14]*.



# Chapter Two: The Intellect: Its Reality, Limits, and the Islamic Stance Towards It

This topic is a cornerstone in many intellectual issues that have led to deviation and the differences among people.

Indeed, discussing "the intellect" involves a complex issue, one that has seen significant differences, branches, and methodologies. It's astonishing that the intellect can be perplexed by itself!

## The Meaning of the Intellect

The term "intellect" is used in texts and scholarly discourse to mean one of four things:

**The first**: Instinct or the faculty endowed by Allah in humans through which they perceive. As some scholars say, it is the power prepared to accept knowledge. This instinct distinguishes humans from animals and the sane from the insane, which is our focus in this chapter.

**The second**: It refers to essential sciences universally shared among all rational beings, like the knowledge that the whole is greater than the part, and that creation necessitates a Creator, etc.

**The third**: It denotes theoretical sciences acquired through contemplation and reasoning.

**The fourth**: It refers to acting upon knowledge, or actions that are based on knowledge, as in Allah's statement: {And they say, "If we had listened or used our intellects, we would not be among the companions of the Blaze"} *[Al-Mulk: 10]*

It's important to clarify the intended meaning of the intellect based on the context in each case.

## The Limits of the Intellect

While the intellect holds a significant position in the Sharia, its limits are narrow, and its domains are restricted; it cannot go beyond these limits. It is inherently deficient and prone to error; thus, it is weaker than to judge matters outside its authority or to be entirely independent of the Sharia. This reflects the perfection of the Creator and the weakness of the creation, as Allah says: {And man was created weak} *[Al-Nisa: 28]*.

Therefore, the rule is: the intellect has authority, but it is limited, not absolute. Evidence for this includes:

**Firstly**: The intellect has no role in matters of the unseen; details related to Allah's attributes, angels, or the hereafter, for example, are initially known only through revelation, not through intellect. The intellect cannot guide to them on its own; it merely accepts and submits to them once they are conveyed, recognizing their possibility.

Secondly: The intellect cannot independently guide to the right path; those who seek guidance solely through it will go astray. The intellect is like the light to the eye; the eye cannot see unless it is illuminated by sunlight or a lamp. Similarly, the intellect cannot discern guidance unless it is connected with the light of the Quran and faith. Reflect on Allah's statement: {And We had certainly established them in such as We have not established you, and We made for them hearing and vision and hearts. But their hearing and vision and hearts availed them not from anything *[of the punishment]* when they were *[continually]* rejecting the signs of Allah ; and they were enveloped by what they used to ridicule} *[Al-Ahqaf: 26]*. Thus, the only path to guidance is through divine revelation: {And if I am guided, it is by what my Lord reveals to me} *[Saba': 50]*.

**Thirdly**: The intellect cannot independently resolve disputes among people. Only divine revelation has this capability, as it is devoid of discrepancies and disturbances. Despite being powerful, intellects vary and often, the unknown can be confused with the rational. Thus, no individual's statement or reasoning alone can settle disputes; only the divine scripture from heaven and the infallible Messenger, ﷺ, conveying what has been revealed to him by Allah the Almighty, can do so. This is why Allah commands referring disputes back to the scripture and the Sunnah, as He says: {If you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is better and more suitable for final determination} *[Al-Nisa: 59]*.

## Reason for the Intellect's Limitation

There are four reasons, which can explain this limitation, which also serve as signs:

**The first reason**: The intellect is an imperfect creation, created by Allah the Almighty as such; imperfect, not complete, limited, and unable to encompass all matters. Many things are beyond its capacity and capability, to the extent that with all their knowledge, intellects, and technologies, scientists do not know everything about a fly!

**The second reason**: The intellect is constrained by what it perceives through the senses. It has no power to understand anything beyond sensory perceptions. Our judgments with our intellects are based on the knowledge stored in our minds, what we call mental representation or previous experience. Thus, if people were told two hundred years ago that a person could travel in an air-conditioned room flying from Medina to Jeddah in minutes, what would they think of the speaker? Most likely, they would consider him insane!

Similarly, if it were said that through a small device, one could hear and see a man in China from Medina as he speaks, the speaker would also likely be deemed insane. Why? Because these concepts were beyond their comprehension, and it's from the human nature to deny what is unfamiliar.

Therefore, the operation of the intellect—which involves understanding, analysis, and deduction—relies on sensory inputs. If one were to go beyond these, their judgment would be misguided.

**The third reason**: The intellect is subject to biases that can divert it from the truth. It is not always objective, as it can be swayed off course by desires, emotions, anger, doubt, negligence, etc., to the point where a wise person once said, "How can the intellect hope for salvation when desires and whims envelop it?" This is evident in both reality and religious texts.

**The fourth reason**: The intellect is not a singular, agreed-upon entity. Beware of a fallacy here; some who champion extreme rationalism make the intellect the standard for judging all things, as if it were a book or a universal law to refer to and be judged by. This is not entirely accurate; the reality is that Zaid has his intellect, Amr has his, and each has their own way of thinking. Yes, there are essential truths that all rational beings agree upon, but there are many issues where the rational disagree; what one person affirms with their intellect, another denies with theirs, while a third may be undecided with their intellect too! Furthermore, what a person affirms with their intellect at one time, they may deny with it at another.

Therefore, the principle is: The intellect is a faculty that varies from person to person. Consider the state of the people of the earth and their differences in religions, sects, and ways of thinking. Ibn al-Wazir said in a line of poetry:

*Disagreements arise from differences in knowledge.*

*Some have more, while others have less.*

It's important to clarify that stating the intellect is limited does not demean it or belittle its value. Rather, it is an acknowledgment of its honor and proper valuation, recognizing that it should not be burdened beyond its capacity. It is not honoring a strong man to task him with carrying a house! Nor is it honoring someone with sharp vision to task them with staring directly at the sun! Similarly, the intellect is honored by being applied within its domain, not by burdening it beyond its capacity.

This is a principle we must understand: honoring the intellect involves using it within its scope, not burdening it beyond its capacity.

As it has been said: Minds are like valleys, each with a certain capacity to hold water. If you were to pour the sea into them, it would result in great corruption and overwhelming flood.

Thus, the intellect has authority within the limits of its domain, and its domain does not extend beyond what can be perceived through the senses. Anything beyond that is unreachable and not subject to its judgment.

The intellect is like a phone; no matter how new, if it reaches a place with no network coverage, it stops working; there's neither sending nor receiving, the same goes for the intellect!

I really like a narration reported by Ibn Battah in his book Al-Ibanah (1/422) from Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both—though the chain of narration has some defaults, the meaning is sound and beneficial. A man brought his son to Ibn Abbas and said, "Dispute has bewildered his intellect, contention has consumed his heart, and he has been diverted from his Lord." The man found that his son was delving into matters beyond his intellectual capacity, affecting his sanity. Ibn Abbas asked, "My nephew, what is the black thing you see?" The boy answered, and Ibn Abbas asked about something else beyond, to which the boy replied, "I don't know." Abdullah said, "My nephew, just as Allah set a finite limit for the eyesight, beyond which is a hidden veil, so He set limits for the hearts' insight that it cannot exceed." Allah restored his intellect, and the boy turned away from meddling in matters that do not concern him, looking into what does not benefit him, and pondering over what confuses him.

It's a truth that must be accepted: "Intellectual capability is limited"; any attempt to delve into what is beyond this capacity is doomed to failure! The "wise" should exhibit humility.

If the intellect is incapable of comprehending things it generally observes, such as the number of sand grains, stars in the sky, leaves on trees, or fish in the sea, how can it aspire to grasp what is beyond the senses?

Here's an important principle that must settle in our hearts: "Allah the Almighty gave us intellects to perceive what is near, not what is far." That is, to understand what is observable and within easy grasp, and to then utilize it as much creatively as possible, without reaching for what is beyond reach.

From this, we understand the mercy of the Prophet, ﷺ, towards his nation when he said, "Reflect on the bounties of Allah, and do not reflect on Allah the Almighty," *[Reported by Al-Tabarani in al-Awsat (6319) and considered acceptable by some scholars]*.

Excessive veneration of the intellect is a root of misguidance. This principle states that "excess in rationalism is the root of deviation," and generally, deviations from the path of truth stem from this. It is evident that there are extreme rationalist doctrines asserting the intellect as the sole reference for interpreting everything in existence, the only criterion for assessing the truthfulness of propositions and making judgments upon them; whatever it perceives is affirmed, and what it does not is denied. This implies self-sufficiency without divine revelation and denies all that the intellect cannot perceive of the unseen.

The glaring truth is that these rationalists blatantly contradict reason itself; if they truly understood, reason itself would tell them: "I have limited capacity, do not burden me with what I cannot bear!"

The invalidity of their doctrine, which posits the intellect as the sole, infallible standard, is evident through tangible, sensory evidence; these rationalists have utterly failed to unveil many things

or to explain them logically, such as the origin of the universe and life, consciousness, emotions, intelligence, the soul, and much more. Therefore, they are gravely mistaken, and those who follow them are undoubtedly making a great mistake.

I say to the rationalist: Let's not go far; let's talk about the brain... the very brain presents in every human, studied by neuroscientists and anatomists, weighing less than a kilogram and a half. Do you know it's one of the most mysterious entities in the universe? No one has yet been able to decode the pattern of neuronal cells and their operations; thoughts, intelligence, emotions... despite it being within their reach. So, how about things that are beyond?

Thus, its creation seems to contain a message directed to us: to be humble, not to be deluded by our intellects and knowledge. If you know something, you are ignorant of many things, and the One who encompasses all knowledge is your Lord, the Almighty.

I compare this rationalist to an ant that walked on a piece of paper and saw the tip of a pen moving across it. This is the extent of the ant's perception, leading it to be extremely fascinated with the tip of the pen, singing praises of its poetry and prose, because of its limited vision; it did not see the pen itself, the handwriting, or the person who is the true creator. Similarly, these individuals know the superficial aspects of worldly life but are oblivious to the greater truth: that there exists a majestic Creator, whose knowledge and mercy encompass everything, the Almighty.

## Lesson Learned from the Above

The lesson to be learned is one of submission; to surrender to Allah, the All-Knowing, the Wise, the Great, and to His revelation. Allah, the Almighty, is the creator of the intellect. The judgment of the intellect is tied to its Creator. He created it as a means to reach

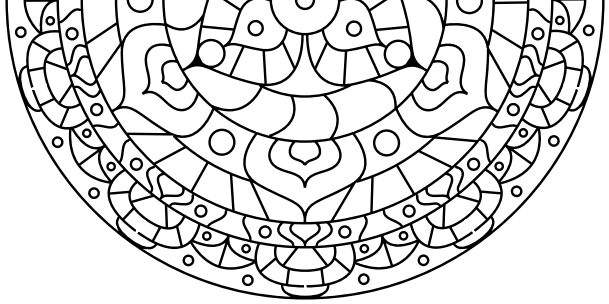
Him, not to cut off from Him, to indicate His power, not to lead away from His wisdom.

Therefore, our principle as Muslims is: "The firm footing of Islam is only established on the back of submission and surrender." And how beautifully did Al-Zuhri, may Allah have mercy on him, say: "From Allah is the message, from the Messenger, ﷺ, is its delivery, and upon us is submission."

All this serves as a precursor to the topic to be discussed in the next chapter: the relationship between reason ('Aql) and revelation (Naql).

*For further benefit*

I recommend reading: "Miftah Dar as-Sa'adah" by Ibn al-Qayyim (1/322-325), Dar 'Alam al-Fawa'id edition, and "Al-Da' wa al-Dawa'" by Ibn al-Qayyim (147), Dar 'Alam al-Fawa'id edition as well.



# Chapter Three: The Relationship Between Revelation and Reason

Initially, it's essential to think about the foundation and basis; what is Islam? Islam is submission to Allah, and orienting oneself entirely towards Him, {And whoever submits his face to Allah while he is a doer of good - then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold} *[Luqman: 22]*.

Islam is responding to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, {O you who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life} *[Al-Anfal: 24]*.

The sincere Muslim's implicit statement to his Lord, the Exalted, is O Lord, I am Your servant, ignorant except for what You teach me, astray except for what You guide me to. There is no guidance for me except through Your revelation, and no happiness except in following Your Prophet ﷺ. I set my face wherever You place me, and I follow wherever You lead me. I am commanded by Your command, abstaining from Your prohibitions, submitting to Your decree, content with Your fate. This is truly a Muslim, and whoever is not like this should reconsider their faith.

Faith necessarily entails adherence to the Quran and the Sunnah, meaning believing in the obligation to follow them, leaving no room for deviation. Only submission and acceptance are allowed, and this matter is serious, not trivial, {It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should *[thereafter]* have any choice in their affair} *[Al-Ahzab: 36]*.

Faith requires the sovereignty of revelation; it governs everything, prioritized over all else, and everything besides it—be it opinions, intellect, or doctrine—is secondary, {O you who believe, do not put *[yourselves]* forward before Allah and His Messenger but fear Allah} *[Al-Hujurat:1]*, {But no, by your Lord, they will not *[truly]* believe until they make you, *[O Muhammad]*, judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in *[full, willing]* submission} *[Al-Nisa: 65]*. This is Islam.

We must always remind ourselves about this issue, because today people are tested with misguided calls that attack the Qur'an and the Sunnah, doubt their authority, or compete with them with the rotten ideas of prioritizing reason over revelation, judging evidence by intellect, or that submission to evidence is contingent upon understanding its wisdom. These and similar calls are misguided, predominantly bearing the scent of hypocrisy, and Allah the Almighty says about the hypocrites, {And when it is said to them, 'Come to what Allah has revealed and to the Messenger,' you see the hypocrites turning away from you in aversion} *[Al-Nisa: 61]*.

The relationship between revelation and reason is one of support, not contradiction. When we say "revelation," it refers to the evidence from the Qur'an and authentic hadiths of the Sunnah, and it is absolutely impossible for valid revelation to contradict clear reason.

It's impossible for revelation and reason to conflict or contradict. There cannot be a verse, for example, that reason deems impossible; such an assumption itself is impossible. There is no opposition between transmitted law and rational truth.

This is a fundamental principle among us Muslims. We believe:

- Allah the Almighty is the one who revealed to His servant Muhammad ﷺ this revelation, the Qur'an, and the Sunnah.
- And He is the one who created the intellects.
- Therefore, the source is one; how could there be any contradiction?

Contradiction occurs in corrupt or incapable minds; corrupt minds, astray, arrogant towards their Lord, naturally claim such contradiction. Or incapable minds, due to their limitations, imagine contradiction and opposition when the reality is otherwise.

## Reasons Some People Imagine a Contradiction

Exploring this matter reveals that the emergence of this misconception is due to three reasons:

### *The first reason: The inauthenticity of what is transmitted.*

Naturally, this does not apply to the Quran but rather to what is claimed to conflict between reason and what is narrated from the Prophet ﷺ. Someone not knowledgeable might hear a hadith that seemingly contradicts basic reason and then claims, "See, here reason and revelation conflict!" But upon verification, it turns out the hadith is not authentically attributed to the Prophet ﷺ; it may be fabricated or weak, thus revealing no real contradiction exists since contradiction can only occur between two established facts. It's worth noting that the authority on authenticating and

weakening hadiths belongs to specialized scholars, not to the general public.

### *The second reason: Attributing to the Sharia what is not part of it.*

Some people might mistakenly believe certain Isra'iliyat (biblical stories) are words of the Prophet ﷺ, or some, perhaps non-Muslims, might wrongly attribute deviant acts of certain sects to Islam falsely, then claim, "Look, this is Islam!" But in truth, Islam is innocent of this.

### *The third reason: The inaccuracy of what is claimed to be rational.*

Mistakes in this area are common; someone might claim that reason necessitates or prohibits something, while the opposite is true. Meaning, what is termed "reason" here might just be an incorrect theoretical proposition labeled as such by its proponent, either due to erroneous conception or belief, based on false premises for that conception or belief.

For example, some say the concept of weighing deeds in the hereafter contradicts reason. When asked why, they say, "Because deeds are intangible, and intangibles cannot be weighed!" This is incorrect; creations have managed to measure some intangibles; in this era, we can measure temperature and light speed, both intangibles. So, is the Creator incapable of weighing intangibles?

Consider this enlightening anecdote: A learned scholar told me he was in a gathering where someone questioned the possibility of Hell (may Allah protect us from it) having two breaths in winter and summer, as stated in an authentic hadith in al-Bukhari and Muslim. "How can one thing emit both cold and heat?" Before I could answer, someone from the general public, not a scholar,

said, "What's the problem with that? This air conditioner, – and he pointed to it - emits cold air from the front and hot air from the back![2]"

Therefore, the error in ruling that something is rationally obligatory or impossible occurs frequently, and the reason is a mistake in the intellectual conception.

### *The fourth reason: Not distinguishing between what is rationally impossible and what is improbable.*

What is rationally impossible, like something being existent and non-existent at the same time, or a part being larger than the whole, cannot possibly be in the Sharia at all.

As for what is improbable yet rationally possible - it's not impossible, but we are not aware of its occurrence in the world; like the existence of a river of honey or milk flowing in Paradise or whatever Allah wills: it is something inherently possible, not impossible, and the One who created a sea of salty water is capable of creating a river of honey or purified milk.

It is essential to distinguish between what is rationally impossible and what is improbable.

Many of the issues raised stem from not distinguishing between these two; some claim that what is revealed is rationally impossible, which may lead to skepticism or denial. However, upon closer examination, it becomes clear that it is not impossible but rather

(2) One of the blessings Allah has bestowed upon us in this era is that modern inventions and scientific discoveries have made it easier for us to understand some of the matters that may have been problematic in the past.

rationally possible, though improbable, unusual, or we have not seen its like or are unaware of its occurrence; there is a difference between the two!

Thus, denying a truthful report because it proves something unusual is a significant methodological error and deviates from the principles of reason and fairness, let alone being a great sin!

### *The fifth reason: Not differentiating between the intellectual impossibilities and intellectual marvels.*

- **Intellectual impossibilities:** What clear reason definitively deems impossible.
- **Intellectual marvels:** What the intellect cannot comprehend, is perplexed by, or stands in awe of its greatness, but does not deem it impossible.

For instance, that Allah Almighty hears every sound, no matter how faint, without one sound distracting Him from another, is profoundly astonishing. The intellect stands amazed before this, acknowledging its incapacity and the greatness and perfection of its Lord, exalted be He.

The mistake here is that some people assume that what the intellect finds bewildering and utterly fails to comprehend is deemed intellectually impossible; this is incorrect. The intellect is not qualified to judge everything that comes in the Sharia or to comprehend it fully. Due to its incapacity - as previously discussed regarding the intellect's limitations - it may stand incapable to comprehend some parts of the revelation, even though it does not deem them impossible.

This incapacity does not justify disrespect towards the Sharia, but rather, it should lead to an acknowledgment of the intellect's

own limitations and shortcomings, and to a firm belief in the perfection of the Creator, the Almighty, and His legislation.

Therefore, it is essential to emphasize the need to distinguish between:

- What the intellect knows to be false and impossible, which never occurs in the Sharia.
- And what the intellect cannot conceive or falls short of understanding in detail. This occurs in matters of the unseen, fate, divine attributes, and even in some jurisprudential issues. Hence, scholars have said: Messengers, peace be upon them, inform us about the marvels that challenge the intellect, but they do not inform us about what is intellectually impossible.

### *The sixth reason: Not understanding the text correctly.*

Someone might claim there is a contradiction between reason and a verse or hadith due to a misunderstanding of the text, not interpreting it correctly.

For example, it is established in Bukhari (1144) and Muslim (774) that the Prophet ﷺ said regarding someone who sleeps through the night without praying: "The devil urinates in his ear." Then, some rationalists say: This hadith clearly contradicts reason because we find no physical trace of this urine, and what contradicts the senses contradicts reason. Therefore, this hadith is rejected for contradicting reason!

The error on the part of this rationalist stems from understanding that the devil's urination is physical, like human urination, which is a mistake and a faulty analogy. The devil is unseen to us, and this is not disputed even by those who raise this objection; thus, his urination is also unseen. If you believe in the existence of the devil despite not seeing him physically, you should also believe in

the existence of his urine even though you do not see it physically. Both of these facts were reported by the trustworthy and truthful Prophet ﷺ, whose prophethood you believe in.

## A Rejected Claim

Some have claimed to offer a solution to this issue, stating: If there is a conflict between reason and revelation, then reason must be prioritized!

This misguided claim is old yet recurrent, composed of two premises and a conclusion:

- The first premise: The claim of the centrality, priority, and precedence of reason, and the subordination of revelation.
- The second premise: That there is a conflict between reason and revelation(3).
- The conclusion: The necessity of prioritizing reason over revelation.

They erred in both premises, resulting in a conclusively erroneous outcome!

## Response to the First Premise:

This claim is undoubtedly false; the truth is that reason is subordinate, and revelation is paramount. Centrality, priority, and precedence undeniably belong to revelation; to the divine revelation from the Creator of intellect, exalted be He. The intellect is merely a tool for understanding revelation, not a judge

(3) These individuals fabricated a conflict between them, which is an imaginary dispute with no factual basis, as previously mentioned.

over it. The evidence for this is found in all proofs of Lordship and Prophethood.

## Response to the Second Premise:

This claim is also false, and its falsehood is evident in several ways:

**The first aspect:** The Prophet ﷺ is infallible, speaking only the truth about Allah and reporting only with honesty. Anyone claiming that his reports contradict clear reason is lying; the supposed reason must not be clear, or the reported revelation must not be authentic, or it was not understood correctly.

**The second aspect:** Comprehensive induction of Sharia evidence demonstrates a complete harmony between reason and revelation.

**The third aspect:** This claim lacks a true example or accurate representation of such a conflict. All alleged conflicts, as shown in previous examples, reveal a misunderstanding, demonstrating that there is no contradiction.

**The fourth aspect**: The most intellectually complete individuals after the Prophets, peace be upon them, are the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, followed by their followers and the followers after them. They never perceived any contradiction between reason and revelation, and their recorded actions and statements stand as testimony.

And as for the conclusion, which is the claim of prioritizing reason over revelation:

This is a false conclusion, built on two flawed premises, and if the premise is flawed, the conclusion is necessarily flawed, as is well-known. However, I will add the following points:

**The first matter:** Islam, as previously mentioned, is fundamentally about submission to revelation. Without this, it loses its meaning. Therefore, prioritizing reason over revelation contradicts the essence of submission; it goes against the very essence of Islam.

**The second matter:** How can the non-infallible be prioritized over the infallible?! The revelation has been definitively proven to be infallible, whereas the outcomes of intellects are fallible and are often erroneous. How often does a person judge something with his intellect, only to later realize his judgment was incorrect!

**The third matter:** Whose intellect is this that we are to make the judge and prioritize? Every individual has an independent intellect from another, with one finding agreeable what another finds objectionable, and vice versa. **Hence, intellects cannot be standardized and hardly ever agree.**

## The Correct Approach When a Person Feels That There Is a Conflict Between Reason and Revelation

**Firstly**: The Muslim must be certain that there is no real conflict between reason and revelation in reality. Firmly believe this principle, and any problem that remains will disappear in time, Allah willing.

**Secondly:** The Muslim should aim to reach the truth and strengthen his faith in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and then he can expect guidance to the correct path. Allah, the Exalted, has said: {Indeed, those who do not believe in the verses of Allah - Allah will not guide them} *[Al-Nahl: 104]*. The opposite implication here is that those who believe in Allah's verses, Allah will guide them. Therefore, the rule is: Believe, and you will be guided.

**Thirdly**: Those who encounter a problem should seek out a trustworthy scholar or scholarly body to present their issue, and Allah willing, they will find the cure for their ailment. The cure for ignorance is to ask questions but be cautious not to lend your ear to the enemies of Allah who confuse you about your religion.

**Fourthly**: Accustom yourself to prioritizing revelation over reason and indeed over everything else absolutely; this is the clear essence of faith. Make this your principle in life: {Follow what has been revealed to you from your Lord and do not follow other than Him any allies} *[Al-A'raf: 3]*.

In conclusion, some people might think that a Muslim asking about aspects of the revelation that they find confusing is absolutely prohibited, but this belief is incorrect. Asking questions is permissible, and even the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, did so on occasion without being rebuked by the Prophet ﷺ. In a Hadith in Al-Bukhari (4760) and Muslim (2806), from the narration of Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, a man asked, "O Messenger of Allah, how will the disbeliever be gathered on his face on the Day of Resurrection?" He found it puzzling that a person could walk on their face since Allah ﷻ says about the disbelievers: {And We will gather them on the Day of Resurrection *[fallen]* on their faces - blind, dumb, and deaf} *[Al-Isra: 97]*. How did the Prophet ﷺ answer him? He said, "Is not He who made him walk on his legs in this world able to make him walk on his face on the Day of Resurrection?"

Note then, the Prophet ﷺ referred him to the power of Allah, the Exalted. Observing this removes a significant confusion, which is the realization of Allah's ﷻ greatness and power; nothing is impossible for Him, Who is capable of everything.

Be aware that asking about intellectual puzzles requires conditions:

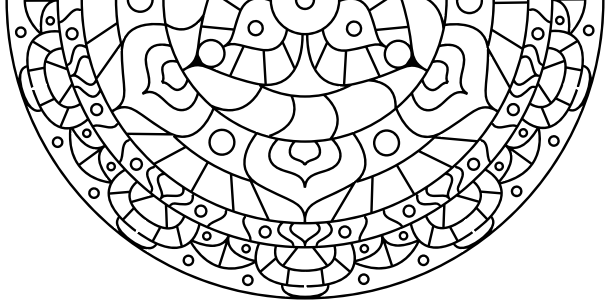
**The first condition**: The inquirer's intention should be to reach the truth.

**The second condition**: The question should be directed to people of knowledge, not, for example, to peers in a WhatsApp group or tweeted out for whoever it might be to answer! This only increases the person's confusion and spreads disarray among others.

**The third condition**: The inquirer must maintain respect towards Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ in their question and hold the Quran and Hadith in high esteem.

*For further benefit*

I recommend reading: "Al-Sawa'iq al-Mursalah" by Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, (3/829), (3/853), and the sections that follow.



# Chapter Four: Faith in the Unseen

Talking about this subject is crucial because, as mentioned in the first episode, Muslims, especially the youth, face challenges, including doubts about faith in the unseen.

The unseen (Al-Ghaib) refers to everything that is hidden from you. It can be absolutely unseen or relatively unseen. Our discussion here focuses on the absolute unseen, which is not perceived by people at all. Therefore, when Allah ﷻ describes the believers as {those who believe in the unseen} *[Al-Baqarah: 3]*, it means those who believe in what they are commanded to believe in, even though it is invisible to the eyes but affirmed in the hearts.

The difference between the realms of the unseen and the witnessed (al-Shahadah) is perception. Thus, whatever is not perceived by the senses belongs to the realm of the unseen, and the realm of the witnessed is its opposite. This clarifies that the unseen does not mean non-existent or unreal, as many unseen realities exist; Allah ﷻ is unseen to us in this world yet exists and is exalted above His creation and distinct from them, as are angels, jinn, paradise, and hell; they are all existent.

Faith in the unseen is the foundation of belief and the essence of faith; a creed without belief in the unseen is no creed at all! There is no faith without belief in the unseen; faith means affirmation, acknowledgment, and tranquility with an unseen matter.

One of Allah's ﷻ wisdoms in making the unseen world hidden from humans is to fulfill the purpose of testing, for Allah ﷻ created mankind to test them: {He who created death and life to test you *[as to]* which of you is best in deed} *[Al-Mulk: 2]*.

In summary, faith in the unseen requires us to refer to He who informed us about it, then to believe in His statement. We do not know much about the divine attributes, the affairs of angels, or the conditions of the hereafter, but we have gained knowledge about these from someone whose truthfulness we trust, and who only speaks the truth; He is the one about whom Allah ﷻ says: {Nor does he withhold from the Unseen} *[At-Takwir: 24]*, He is Muhammad ﷺ.

## Allah's Facilitation for His Servants to Believe in the Unseen

Out of mercy for His servants, Allah ﷻ has facilitated for them the knowledge of some unseen realities and aided them in believing in them. This is indicated by:

- Allah mentioned parables that bring closer the understanding of the intended meanings, as in His statement: {And Our command is but one, like a glance of the eye} *[Al-Qamar: 50]*.
- Allah created His servants with the innate ability to grasp the commonalities between different truths; the mind connects what it has seen with what it has not seen through the slightest resemblance between them. For example, when Allah has made paradise contain fruit and rivers, through what we conceive in this world, we find something in common with the hereafter; we

understand the concept of what is in the hereafter in a general sense, while fully acknowledging that the specifics are different, meaning there are common and distinct aspects.

- Among the things that facilitate belief in the unseen for worshippers is the scientific discoveries of recent times that Allah ﷻ has made accessible to His servants in these latter ages, which were unknown before. These discoveries ease our faith in the unseen; several centuries ago, had someone spoken about viruses as we know them today, they would have been considered insane. If someone at that time claimed that a drop of water contains thousands of living organisms, they would have been deemed mad. However, today's reality is different, even though people of faith had certainty in the unseen before this. These discoveries help doubters or those with weak faith and increase others in certainty. Why? Because each new discovery about the wonders of this universe increases certainty in the existence of the unseen world; people see the broad scope of possibilities and the narrow range of impossibilities, realizing how much they do not know! Thus, they acknowledge that just because something is far from their usual experiences does not mean it is impossible and to be disbelieved. This is why Allah says: {Soon We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth} *[Fussilat: 53]*.

The aim is not to believe in the existence of every possibility, but rather to notice that there are many possibilities and to understand that their existence is possible, but their affirmation requires truthful evidence.

Some might think that a person's belief in something they have not seen or sensed contradicts reason. This is a misconception; faith in the unseen is not a suspension of reason but rather preserves and directs the human intellect. It is protected from preoccupation

with matters not created for it or beyond its capacity to encompass, focusing instead on what it can process from the perceptible world and properly utilize.

This is affirmed by looking at philosophers who, without divine revelation, delved into matters of the unseen (or what is called metaphysics) and came up with laughable nonsense, unlike their contributions in geometry, mathematics, and the like, which were beneficial and did not face disagreements as they did in metaphysical issues.

The claim that belief in the unseen contradicts reason is baseless; the existence of unseen realities does not conflict with rational judgments. It was mentioned before: there is not a single matter related to the unseen in the revelations that reason deems impossible. The realm of the unseen contains matters beyond the independent comprehension or full grasp of reason, or different from what reason is accustomed to contemplating, because it exceeds its limits and capabilities.

## Deviant Directions in Faith in the Unseen

**The first direction**: Denial or skepticism about it, which is the focus here. From the outcomes of Western civilization and its ideological issues that have reflected on some Muslims today is the assertion that truths can only be proven through sensory experience. Hence, anything beyond sensory perception is subject to doubt or denial, including matters of the unseen, leading to the rejection of what they have not encompassed in knowledge.

**The second direction**: Seeking to access the unseen through means other than revelation, such as those who engage with soothsayers, fortune tellers, and astrology. This will be discussed further in an upcoming chapter.

## The Rational Foundation for the Belief in the Unseen

The rational foundation for the belief in the unseen can be understood by considering seven points, which need to be interconnected for a complete understanding:

**The first point:** There are things unknown to us within this world and beyond, a fact that is indisputable. Every scientific discovery in this universe reveals this truth. Thus, there are many things unknown to us. For example, the visible universe, made up of matter, constitutes only about 5% of the total mass of the universe, while the remainder—about 95%—is unknown! This includes dark energy and dark matter. These exist yet are unknown! Imagine, 95% of the universe's composition: all humans, with all their technology, are incapable of understanding or detecting it, despite knowing of its existence. Therefore, we know that we do not know, and we acknowledge our ignorance!

In conclusion, there's no justification for denying what we do not understand simply because we are incapable of comprehending or explaining it. Just because something is beyond what is customary does not mean it is impossible, especially when there is evidence to trust the informer.

**The second point**: The human intellect is too limited to encompass everything. This has been discussed in previous sections.

**The third point**: The senses are not the only standard for proving things. If what is perceived by the senses exists, there is no evidence to suggest that what is not perceived by the senses does not exist. This is an accepted logical principle: lack of knowledge does not equate to knowledge of non-existence. Additionally, those who claim that what is beyond sensory perception - that which is not detectable by the five senses - does not exist, contradict both logic

and sensory experience, and would undermine the foundations of empirical science itself, as no one has seen gravity or the atoms that compose matter, nor many other things in this universe. Therefore, sources of knowledge are greater than just the senses or the intellect, and both intellect and senses have their limitations. If a person is incapable of comprehending the nature of their own soul, despite knowing it exists, or understanding the essence of their intellect and intelligence, which they use, it means that if one's intellect and senses fail to grasp what is within themselves, they are even less capable of understanding what lies beyond.

**The fourth point**: Trustworthy reports are a source of knowledge. All rational people understand that some things are perceived through senses, some through reason, and others through reliable reports. Even atheists, who claim to reject revelation because it is mere information, accept scientific and philosophical findings based on others' reports. The irrefutable and certain evidence shows that the prophets, peace be upon them, are truthful and free from falsehood. Accepting the reports from the truthful is obligatory. Therefore, when they inform us about the matters of the unseen, accepting their information is required. Whoever denies it does so without any valid justification.

**The fifth point**: No information about the unseen contradicts rational judgments, as previously explained. Thus, denying them lacks evidence. It becomes clear that all the unseen creations that exist or are possible in themselves are possible to comprehend intellectually.

**The sixth point:** Revelation is infallible, while intellect is not. The infallible is prioritized over the fallible. This applies to what the intellect can comprehend, so what about matters beyond the intellect's grasp, such as the unseen? Therefore, it is obligatory to submit to revelation in these matters. Anyone who disregards

revelation will be lost and confused, as the position of arbitration cannot tolerate a vacuum or absence! It is either an infallible revelation or a fallible intellect; which of them is more deserving of arbitration and submission by the fair-minded? The answer is clear. It should be noted that those who have put divine revelation behind them are in reality detached from revelation, but it is a human revelation governed by whims and without infallibility. Allah Almighty says: {Some of them inspire others with embellished speech to deceive} *[Al-An'am: 112]*. As for the people of faith, they adhere to an infallible revelation that is free from error.

**The seventh and final matter**: Faith in the unseen is an innate human nature, with which Allah Almighty has honored humans. Only those with arrogance in their hearts and who follow their desires oppose this.

Belief in the unseen is deeply ingrained in all humans, hence across all ages, you find them believing in doctrines that contain many unseen aspects. Notice today in the West, this is confirmed through the pursuit of esoteric or Gnostic ideas, energy sciences, and the like. What causes this? It's the need to fill the void created by contemporary material reality and extreme rationalist tendencies, attempting to satisfy and calm human needs with unseen beliefs, albeit, unfortunately, incorrect ones.

Disregarding all this; look at the state of atheists, who are the staunchest deniers of unseen realities. In truth, they live in a dense forest of the unseen! They are deeply immersed in belief in the unseen! For instance, atheists embrace Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection. Let's ask them: The simple first cell, which is the nucleus of all creation for them, has anyone among you atheists seen it, or is it unseen?

The process of natural selection they claim, the division and evolution of cells, the transition of beings from one phase to another—are these felt? Have you witnessed them with your own eyes, or are they unseen?

In reality, they believe in a "fabricated" unseen, relying on "baseless" reports. Their principle is given; then what do they deny about the people of faith?

In conclusion, accepting these seven points will ease belief in the unseen and also its persuasion, by the will of Allah.

As for the contradiction in which these deniers of the unseen have fallen, it is indeed undeniable; they deny something and believe its counterpart. For example, atheists deny that Allah created Adam from clay and then humanity propagated after him because, to them, it is an unseen, non-sensible reality. However, they believe that the origin of humans was a cell that existed billions of years ago and then evolved to new creatures through natural selection, even though this is also unseen! Why then is it acceptable to them (even though there is no evidence for it), while the unseen believed by the faithful is not acceptable (even though its source is a truthful divine revelation)?

Notice their contradiction in another matter: they deny reports and accept them simultaneously! If one of them is discussed and uses a theory as evidence, we ask: Did you apply it yourself? Have you perceived it directly? He would say: No, it was done by so-and-so and stated by such-and-such! This contradicts their alleged methodology that denies the acceptance of reports; he has reached his belief through accepting reports, not through sensory experience! Then, why do you, atheist, fault the people of faith for accepting reports of the unseen?

If your reports talk about sensible things; the unseen reports of the messengers about the afterlife, angels, jinn, etc., also talk about sensible things, but these are perceived after death. If these are reports and those are reports, then the reports of the messengers are more deserving of acceptance, due to the conclusive evidence of their truthfulness.

## Summary

Belief in the unseen can be intellectually founded through understanding seven matters:

1. There are unknown things to us within and outside this world.
2. The intellect is too weak to comprehend everything fully.
3. The senses are not the only criterion for proving things.
4. A truthful report is a source of knowledge.
5. There is nothing in reports of the unseen that contradicts rational judgments.
6. Revelation is infallible, but the intellect is not.
7. Belief in the unseen is an inherent human nature.

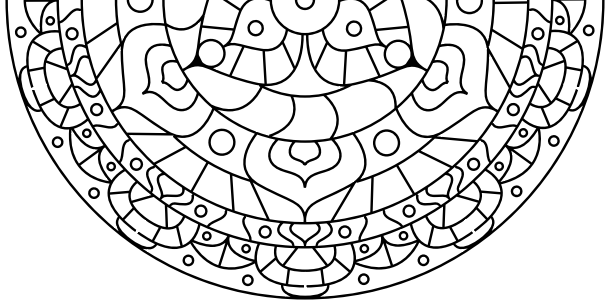
*For further benefit*

I recommend reading two sections:

**The first section**: "Taysir al-Latif al-Manan fi Khulasat Tafsir al-Qur'an" by Shaikh Ibn Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him, (pages 231 - 233).

**And the second section**: "Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan" by Shaikh Ibn Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on

him, (page 40) when interpreting the verse: {Those who believe in the unseen} *[Surah Al-Baqarah: 3]*.



# Chapter Five: Proofs of the Prophethood of Our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ *(Part One)*

Before addressing this topic, here are four introductory remarks:

**The First**: The sending of messengers, peace be upon them, is a manifestation of Allah's mercy and wisdom. Human souls are innately drawn to knowledge of Allah, longing for it to the utmost degree, and are in dire need of His guidance to the straight path. Human intellect, regardless of its advancements, cannot achieve this on its own. Thus, out of the wisdom and benevolence of our Lord, He sent messengers to establish the connection between Him and His servants. Therefore, prophethood is the spirit, light, and order of the world. No one deviates from it except those who are utterly lost; there is no salvation for humanity, in this world or the hereafter, except by following the messengers. Their sending is among the greatest blessings of Allah to people. Without them, humans would be no better than animals, rather in a worse state,

for the world is dark and cursed except for what is illuminated by the light of the message.

**The Second**: Distinguishing between a true prophet and a false claimant is one of the easiest things; for someone who claims prophethood is either the most truthful and perfect of people or the most dishonest and vile. Differentiating between these two is simpler than distinguishing between the sane and the insane, or the knowledgeable and the ignorant.

**The Third**: Out of Allah's wisdom and mercy, He sent no messenger except that He adorned him with the highest virtues of human perfection, supported by the greatest signs and proofs. Prophets convey Allah's messages; hence, Allah establishes clear proofs of their truthfulness. He says: {Indeed, We have sent Our messengers with clear signs} *[Al-Hadid: 25]*. Therefore, these are logical, certain proofs, clear and unmistakable, without ambiguity or obscurity.

If this applies to every prophet, then our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has a greater share of these proofs and evidence. Allah Almighty says: {O mankind, there has come to you a convincing proof from your Lord, and We have sent down to you an illuminating light} *[Al-Nisa: 174]*. Thus, the proofs of the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the signs of his message are numerous, beyond count; every verse of the Quran is a proof of his truthful message, every hadith, every event from his life ﷺ: upon reflection, stands as a beacon of his prophethood. Each proof is a testament in itself, and their collective strength and correlation amplify their power and significance.

**The Fourth**: The subject of this discussion and what follows: the proofs of his prophethood and the signs of his message ﷺ. Some might ask: What is the benefit of presenting this topic to a people

who believe in his prophethood? Wouldn't it be more appropriate to address it to those who deny him, or those who harbor doubts about his prophethood?

The answer is that such a view is mistaken. Yes, the disbelievers must be informed about this topic; but even we, the members of his believing nation who would sacrifice our lives for him, peace and blessings be upon him, I say: we too are in dire need of revisiting this subject. Recalling these proofs increases a believer's faith, certainty, love, and veneration, and by Allah's grace, leads to contentment with him as a Prophet and Messenger. The Prophet ﷺ said: "He has tasted the sweetness of faith who is content with Allah as his Lord, Islam as his religion, and Muhammad as his messenger." Reported by Muslim (34).

## The First Proof: His Life Before Prophethood

Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ reached the pinnacle in his character, the radiance of his appearance, the eloquence of his speech, the nobility of his lineage, and the dignity of his people.

His people recognized him for his strong intellect, sound understanding, balanced insight, and they witnessed his vast generosity, high etiquette, purity of self, great bravery, abundant modesty, and utmost manliness; such characteristics are not those of a liar fabricating falsehood about Allah.

Had he not claimed, "I am a messenger," his very countenance would have spoken it!

Consider, O fortunate one: A man who adhered to truth and trustworthiness for forty years, never lying to anyone among the people, not in trade nor in other affairs, never breaking a promise nor betraying a trust. With a sound mind, noble lineage, high

status among his people, courageous in his stands, known for his generosity, asceticism, piety, and compassion; how could it be imagined, with all these perfections, that he would abandon his way after reaching the age of forty to commit the greatest lie ever told on the face of the earth, an act only the most contemptible of humanity would do; falsely claiming - to be a messenger from Allah receiving revelations? This is utterly improbable!

The Quran points to this notion and alerts the disbelievers of Quraysh to it, saying: "{Or do they not recognize their Messenger, and so they deny him?} [Al-Mu'minun: 69). They—both the young and the old—knew him perfectly well with every commendable trait; even before his mission, they called him 'the Trustworthy.' So why wouldn't they believe him when he came to them with the clear truth?

I remind you of what I mentioned earlier: The claim of prophethood only comes from two types of people: either from the most truthful and virtuous of people, or from the most deceitful and vile. Muhammad bin Abdullah ﷺ was the best, the most truthful, and the most righteous of people.

After his prophethood, the Prophet ﷺ spent thirteen years in Mecca, challenging Quraysh, inviting them to Islam, and criticizing their idols. Despite all this, not once did anyone from them accuse him of lying before his prophethood, even in a single incident. Had they found just one lie, they would have broadcasted it everywhere. In Sahih Bukhari and Muslim, in the story of Heraclius with Abu Sufyan, Heraclius said: "I asked you whether you accuse him of lying before he said what he said, and you claimed that you did not. So, I knew that he would not abandon lying to people to lie about Allah."

It is known about people that one who adheres to truth in their youth is more committed to it in their elder years, and one who is honest in matters concerning themselves is even more so in matters concerning Allah Almighty.

In summary: Truthfulness and moral perfection—before his mission—are among the signs of a true prophet. Our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was acknowledged for this by both friend and foe; thus, he is indeed the Messenger of Allah.

## The Second Proof: His Life After Prophethood and His Moral Perfection After the Message

Our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was a unique moral exemplar without parallel. He embodied all virtues and good qualities from every aspect to the extent that his character became the benchmark for morality. Anyone who glimpses into his life is captivated by the greatness of his nobility and glory and becomes certain of the truth of Allah's words: {And indeed, you are of a great moral character} *[Al-Qalam: 4]*.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the most truthful in speech, the gentlest in nature, and the kindest in companionship.

He was the most faithful to promises and the most fulfilling of them. He was always cheerful, easy-going... His character was the Quran!

He was the most beautiful in creation, both outwardly and inwardly.

His face shone like the full moon at night, his speech was entirely light, his entrance and departure were light. He was the most complete in external and internal light, and his light was among the signs of his prophethood.

Al-Tirmidhi reported (2485) from Abdullah ibn Salam, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived in Medina, people rushed towards him. I came among the people to look at him, and when I clearly saw the face of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ I realized that his face was not the face of a liar."

If there were no clear signs in him... His very presence would bring you the news.

He was not abusive, obscene, nor a curser. He often remained silent and laughed little. He was not harsh, coarse, or noisy in the markets. Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "By Allah, I served him for seven or nine years; I do not know that he ever said to me for something I did, 'Why did you do that?' and for something I did not do, 'Why didn't you do such and such?'" Reported by Muslim (2309).

He was the bravest of people. Al-Bara' ibn Azib, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "When the battle grew fierce, we sought protection by his side, and the brave among us was the one who could match his stance." Reported by Muslim (1776).

He was the most generous and the best in spreading goodness, maintaining kinship ties, carrying the burden, providing for the needy, hosting the guest, and assisting in the fulfillment of rights. Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was never asked for anything except that he gave it. A man came to him, and he gave him a flock of sheep between two mountains. The man returned to his people and said: 'O my people! Embrace Islam for Muhammad gives so generously as one who does not fear poverty'" Reported by Muslim (2312).

He was the most modest of people, to the extent that he was more shy than a virgin in her seclusion.

He was the most humble of people; so much so that a slave girl could take him by the hand and lead him around the city for her needs until she was done, and then he would return.

When someone took his hand, he would not withdraw his hand until that person let go first.

He disliked it when people stood up for him as he entered a room.

He would sit with the poor, visit the needy, and accept invitations.

He was the most ascetic of people towards this world, not inclined towards its luxuries nor interested in its adornments. His Lord offered him the choice between being a king prophet or a servant messenger, and he chose to be a servant messenger. He said, "What have I to do with this world? I am in this world like a rider who takes shade under a tree, then goes away and leaves it." Reported by al-Tirmidhi (2377).

Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not fill his stomach with wheat bread three days in a row until he passed away" Agreed upon. (Bukhari: 5146, Muslim: 2970)

He was the best of men to his family and the best husband to his wife, to the extent that he would serve his family in their home.

He never criticized any food; if he desired it, he ate it, and if not, he left it.

He was affectionate with children, compassionate towards women, and advised caring for them.

He informed about himself ﷺ saying, "I start the prayer intending to elongate it, but when I hear a child crying, I shorten my prayer because I know how distressed his mother gets from his crying." Agreed upon. (Bukhari: 709, Muslim: 470)

Indeed, he was merciful even towards animals, showing kindness to them; he commanded to treat animals well during slaughter, to sharpen the knife, and to put the animal at ease. He forbade using anything with a soul as a target for mere shooting practice and forbade using animals as seats for mere sitting. He even tilted a vessel for a cat to drink from!

Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "We were on a journey with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when we saw a hummingbird with two chicks, so we took them. The hummingbird came fluttering around, and when the Messenger of Allah came, he said, 'Who has distressed this bird by taking its chicks? Return them to her.'" Reported by Abu Dawud (5268).

His mercy ﷺ extended even to inanimate objects; he used to stand and give sermons leaning against a palm trunk in his mosque - before the pulpit was made. When he started using the pulpit, the trunk cried like a child longing for him until he came to it and hugged it until it calmed down. It was nothing but a piece of wood; what mercy is this!

He was the most forgiving and patient of people, more forbearing in annoyance than anyone, and safer in dispute than anyone healthy. An Arab once pulled him violently by his garment, leaving a mark on his neck, yet he merely turned to him, then laughed, and then commanded that he be given a grant!

Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was never given a choice between two matters but he chose the easier of the two as long as it was not sinful; if it was sinful, he was the farthest of people from it. The Messenger of Allah never took revenge for himself unless the sanctities of Allah were violated." Agreed upon. (Bukhari: 3560, Muslim: 2327)

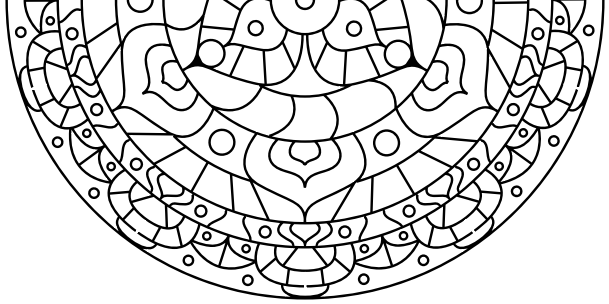
Delving into these gardens is lengthy, lengthy; indeed, suffice it to taste its spring and fill from its streams what the container can hold.

This is Muhammad bin Abdullah ﷺ great in everything, acknowledged by both distant and close, companion and foe; Are these the morals of a liar? Are these the traits of one who fabricates lies about Allah? Far from it, indeed, they are significant evidence of his truthfulness to those who are just. Twenty-three years of his mission, preceded by forty years; people knew him during all this time for the highest of ethics and the purest of characteristics, not once was a fault recorded against him; could this be the state of a lying claimant whose interior harbors the utmost deceit? By Allah, this is utterly impossible.

And I conclude with a beautiful word from Ibn Hazm, may Allah have mercy on him, where he said: "Indeed, the biography of Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, for those who reflect on it, necessarily requires his affirmation, and testifies that he is truly the Messenger of Allah; if there were no miracle other than his biography ﷺ." (Al-Fisal 2/ 73).

*For further benefit,*

I recommend reading: The book "Al-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyah" by Al-Tirmidhi, or its abridgement by Al-Albani.



# Chapter Six: Proofs of Our Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ *(Part Two)*

## The Third Proof: His Foretelling of Unseen Events

The discussion on the proofs of our Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ prophethood continues, with the third proof being his accurate foretelling of unseen events.

"Unseen" here refers to the absolute unseen, which is entirely unknown to all humans and jinn. This type of knowledge is exclusive to Allah, Who reveals certain aspects of it to His chosen messengers. Allah states, {He is the Knower of the unseen, and He does not disclose His knowledge of the unseen to anyone except to a messenger He has chosen} *[Al-Jinn: 26 - 27]*.

His ﷺ foretelling of future unseen events is a testament to his truthfulness, as these events occurred precisely as he described. The accuracy of these foretellings, given their frequency and the

extensive details provided, surpasses human capability, leading to the logical conclusion that they were revelations from his Lord.

It cannot be argued that these predictions were mere guesses or perceptions because, although guesses and perceptions might occasionally be correct, they can also be incorrect. However, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ accurately predicted all events he described, indicating these were revelations from the Knower of the unseen.

## Examples of His Foretelling Future Unseen Events

Consider the following: How did Prophet Muhammad ﷺ know that the Romans would defeat the Persians after being defeated themselves? Allah says, {Alif Lam Mim. The Romans have been defeated in the nearest land. But they, after their defeat, will soon be victorious. Within three to nine years} *[Al-Rum: 1 - 4]*. The Romans defeated the Persians exactly seven years later.

This knowledge could only have come through revelation from Allah. The proof lies in both the prediction and its occurrence. The events unfolded exactly as foretold: the Romans defeated the Persians within the specified time limit, and the believers rejoiced.

The act of making such specific future predictions itself serves as a sign of his prophethood; no sensible person would risk their credibility by making a specific prediction about the future based on fabrication, without knowing whether it would come true.

Isn't this a clear indication that he was a messenger from the One who orchestrates all affairs and is all-knowing?

This is frequent in the Quran and the Sunnah; so, reflect on the implications of occurrence and information in what follows:

His saying, Exalted be He: {You will surely enter the Sacred Mosque, if Allah wills, in safety} *[Al-Fath: 27]*. And what He informed about happened exactly as He informed!

His saying, Exalted be He: {Those who stay behind will say when you set out to take the spoils: 'Let us follow you'} *[Al-Fath: 15]*. And what He informed about indeed occurred!

His informing ﷺ that Umar and Uthman, may Allah be pleased with them, would die as martyrs, where he said - as reported by Bukhari (3675): "Stand firm, Uhud, for there is none upon you but a Prophet, a Siddiq, and two martyrs." And what he informed about happened; they died - may Allah be pleased with them - as martyrs. How could he have known this if it were not for it being a revelation from Allah?

How did he ﷺ know that he would die in his illness which he died from, and that his daughter Fatima, may Allah be pleased with her, would be the first of his household to join him?! In Sahihain (Bukhari: 3625, Muslim: 2450), Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, said: The Prophet ﷺ whispered to Fatima in his illness in which he passed away, something that made her cry, then he whispered to her something that made her laugh, and when we asked her about it, she said: "The Prophet ﷺ told me that he would pass away in his illness which he died from and I cried, then he told me that I would be the first of his family to follow him and I laughed."

He informed ﷺ as in Sahih Bukhari (2704) - that his grandson Hasan bin Ali, may Allah be pleased with them, would bring reconciliation between two great factions of Muslims; and what he informed about happened with the conflict and then the unity of the companions afterward due to Hasan, may Allah be pleased

with him, in the year of unity. How could he have known this if not for it being revealed to him from Allah?!

He informed ﷺ - as delivered to him from the Quran - that the Jews would never wish for death, He, Exalted be He, said: {If you should desire the Hereafter with Allah as exclusive, while excluding people, then wish for death if you are truthful. But they will never wish for it, ever, because of what their hands have sent ahead, and Allah is Knowing of the wrongdoers} *[Al-Baqarah: 94 - 95]*. And what he informed about happened; none of them wished for it!

He informed ﷺ by what Allah revealed to him that Abu Lahab and Walid bin Mughira are people of the Fire, and it is necessary that they die disbelievers. He, Exalted be He, said about the former: {He will *[enter to]* burn in a Fire of *[blazing]* flame} *[Al-Masad: 3]*, and said about the latter: {I will burn him in Saqar} *[Al-Mudathir: 26]*. Although the possibility of their pretending to accept Islam - even falsely and hypocritically - existed! Yet what he ﷺ informed about happened; neither Abu Lahab nor Walid bin Mughira accepted Islam; thus, it is confirmed that he, ﷺ, does not speak from his own desire, rather he is a conveyer of revelation from the Knower of the Unseen, Exalted be He.

He informed ﷺ about the appearance of the Khawarij and they appeared, he said, ﷺ: "A group will deviate at a time of division among the Muslims, the closer of the two groups to the truth will kill them." Reported by Muslim (1064), and they emerged exactly as he, ﷺ, informed.

He informed ﷺ about a fire that would emerge from the Hijaz, saying - as in the two Sahihs (Bukhari: 7118, Muslim: 2902): "The Hour will not come until a fire emerges from the land of the Hijaz, illuminating the necks of camels in Busra." Busra is a town in the Sham (Levant), and what he informed about happened; this fire

appeared in the year 654 AH. Al-Dhahabi, may Allah have mercy on him, said in his book History of Islam (14/660): "The matter of this fire is Mutawatir (widely transmitted) ... and more than one who was in Busra at night recounted seeing the necks of camels in its light."

He informed ﷺ Umm Haram bint Milhan, may Allah be pleased with her, that she would participate in sea battles with the companions, may Allah be pleased with them, as reported by Bukhari (2924). This includes several unseen matters that occurred:

- His informing of the continuation of his Ummah after him.
- That among them would be companions of strength and impact against the enemy.
- That they would gain control over lands to the extent of launching sea expeditions.
- That Umm Haram, may Allah be pleased with her, would live to that time.
- That she would be among those who would participate in a sea expedition.
- That she would not experience the time of the second expedition.

Six matters of the unseen, informed by him who does not speak from his own desires, in a single narration! And they occurred exactly as he informed.

Among them is his saying ﷺ: "There are angels guarding the passes of Medina; neither plague nor the Dajjal will enter it." (Bukhari:1880, Muslim: 1379). The plague is a well-known disease from old times; characterized by glands and tumors that usually appear in the armpits of the body, and death is almost certain for those who contract it.

The scholars have said: This is among the Muhammad's miracles; because the plague has afflicted thousands of cities and villages, yet it has been prevented from entering Medina for these long ages; it has never entered it - to this day!

Al-Munawi - who died in 1031 AH - said in his book Fayd al-Qadir (4/321): "And Allah has shown the truthfulness of His Messenger ﷺ; it has not been reported that the plague entered it."

His informing ﷺ that a group of his companions are from the people of Paradise - like the ten given glad tidings of it; this is an indication of the truthfulness of his prophethood in two ways:

**Firstly**, from the aspect of his informing of this initially; because a liar would not take such a risk, where he exposes everything, he built to demolition in case one of them apostatized, and this is - logically - possible! But the truthful, the believed, ﷺ, informed that they are from the people of Paradise; because revelation is made to him from Him who knows what will be, and the hearts of the servants are in His hand.

**Secondly**, from their steadfastness in Islam until their deaths; none of them apostatized or showed contrary to the requirements of piety and righteousness, and they continued acting as the people of Paradise until they left the world! Thus, his truthfulness, ﷺ, appeared.

This is but a drop from the ocean of many future events the Prophet ﷺ, informed about, which occurred exactly as he informed ﷺ.

## His Informing ﷺ About Past Unseen Matters

The matter regarding past unseen events is like that of future unseen events; for his informing ﷺ about them is also a proof

of his prophethood. He informed about unseen events that had occurred or were still happening, concerning the jinn, angels, the creation of humans, the heavens and the earth, and stories of prophets before him, among others. This is a decisive proof that he received this knowledge from his Lord, and it is impossible for these to be fabrications from him - far be it from him; for these are many precise and detailed accounts, without contradiction or difference, and no one contested him on these matters during his time or after. If he had received them from others - like the People of the Book - he would have needed to travel east and west for years to gather even a small amount of it, and to possess a vast library from which he could draw, and none of this was the case! His life was mostly spent in Mecca before his prophethood, and it was not a place of learning or libraries.

Another matter: is that he ﷺ was illiterate and could neither read nor write!

A third matter: is that logic dictates the impossibility of what he informed about being fabrications from himself; for he would then be taking a significant risk with the success of his call! For it is not safe from the scholars of the People of the Book or others discovering what he mentions and then falsifying him, causing his call to fail.

Is this not proof that he is truly the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?! Indeed, so may Allah bless and grant him peace abundantly.

## The fourth evidence: the miracles that Allah performed through His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

The sensory signs that Allah the Exalted performed through His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ commonly known as miracles, have been referred to in the Quran and Sunnah as signs, evidence,

and clear proofs. They are meant to be extraordinary signs that Allah the Exalted displays through His messengers as a testimony to their truthfulness. They necessitate complete compliance, for the occurrence of a miracle alongside the claim of prophethood necessitates certain knowledge that Allah manifested it to attest to their truthfulness; just as if someone sent by another were to say: "If you indeed sent me to these people, stand up and sit down," and then it happens; we know by necessity that he did it to affirm his truthfulness.

The point is that these are dazzling miracles and decisive extraordinary events, a significant matter and a luminous proof, that the world has not faced any opposition at all.

There is no doubt that our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has the greatest share of miracles compared to other prophets, and it is mentioned by some scholars that he ﷺ, was given three thousand miracles.

And no wonder; for he is the Seal of the Prophets ﷺ and his message is the lasting one until Allah inherits the earth and whoever is on it.

## Examples of the Signs (Miracles)

Among these signs is the splitting of the moon, as the Almighty said: {The Hour has drawn near, and the moon has been cleft asunder} *[Al-Qamar: 1]*. This is one of the great signs given to the Prophet ﷺ. Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, reported: "The people of Mecca asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to show them a sign, so he showed them the moon split in two until they saw Hira' between them" reported by Bukhari (3868).

The narrations of the moon's splitting are Mutawatir (widely and consistently reported) in meaning, narrated by a group of the companions, may Allah be pleased with them. This is a magnificent sign, unparalleled by any signs of the prophets, hence it was specifically given to their leader ﷺ.

Among his miracles ﷺ is the glorification of food in his presence. Bukhari (3579) reported from Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him, who recounted something he witnessed with the Prophet ﷺ and said: "Indeed, we used to hear the food glorify Allah while it was being eaten."

Among his miracles ﷺ is the poisoned cooked sheep on his dining table, along with his companions, informing them that it was poisoned. Abu Dawud (4512) reported that a Jewish woman presented him with a poisoned sheep at Khaybar, and he said to his companions, "Stop eating, for it - the sheep - has informed me that it is poisoned."

Among his miracles ﷺ is water springing forth between the fingers of the Prophet, ﷺ. Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, reported: "The time for 'Asr prayer came, and the people did not find water. So, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was brought a vessel and he placed his hand in it." Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, then said: "Water began to flow from between his fingers, and the people performed ablution. It was asked, 'How many were you?' He said, 'Three hundred or nearly three hundred.'" (Bukhari: 3572, Muslim: 2279).

Among his miracles ﷺ is the multiplication of food in his presence. Among these is mentioned in the two Sahihs: "reported that Jabir, may Allah be pleased with him, invited the Prophet ﷺ to his house on the day of the Battle of the Trench over a small goat and some barley. So, the Prophet ﷺ invited the people of

the trench, the Muhajirun and the Ansar. Then he prayed over the food and breathed on it, and they all ate, and then left while the food remained as it was." (Bukhari: 4101, Muslim: 2039)

And when Abu Talha, may Allah be pleased with him, invited him to a meal of barley bread: "He invited a group of his companions numbering seventy or eighty, and they all ate together," agreed upon. (Bukhari: 3578, Muslim: 2040)

And when Umm Sulaim, may Allah be pleased with her, made some Hays (a mixture of dates and ghee): He placed his hand in it and prayed; and the food sufficed around three hundred of the companions. The hadith is agreed upon. (Bukhari: 5163, Muslim: 1428).

Among his miracles, ﷺ, is the submission of trees to him. Muslim in his Sahih (3012) reported from Anas, may Allah be pleased with him: "They were traveling with the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, until they descended into a lush valley. The Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, went to relieve himself. I followed him with a container of water. The Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, looked around but did not find anything to conceal himself with, then noticed two trees at the edge of the valley. He went to one of them, took hold of one of its branches and said, 'Submit to me by the permission of Allah.' It complied with him like a docile camel, which its handler can easily lead, until he reached the other tree, took hold of one of its branches, and said, 'Submit to me by the permission of Allah.' It also complied in the same manner, until, when he was in the middle between them, he said, 'Join together over me by the permission of Allah.' So, they joined together. Then, as Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, mentioned, the two trees separated, and each stood firm on its trunk."

When Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, complained about his eyes during the battle of Khaybar, he, ﷺ, spat in them; and he was cured as if he had no previous pain. Agreed upon (Bukhari:3701, Muslim: 2406).

And when the leg of Abdullah bin Atik, may Allah be pleased with him, was broken, he, ﷺ, stroked it, and it was as if he never felt pain in it. Reported by Bukhari (4039).

This is but a drop from the ocean of the clear signs, and it is evident that miracles are a definitive proof of the truthfulness of the messengers through whose hands they occurred; because when Allah, the Exalted, breaks the usual norms of His creation to affirm His prophet, it undeniably indicates the truthfulness of that prophet, Allah's endorsement of him in his claim of prophethood, and His support for him. This constitutes necessary evidence that does not require deliberation and instills certainty in its indication immediately upon knowing it.

The narrations of prophetic miracles have been widely and consistently transmitted, passed down from generation to generation and from predecessor to successor; thus, it is impossible for a rational person to deny them.

## How Can the Authenticity of the Aforementioned Narrations be Verified?

**Firstly**: To those who doubt or deny these narrations, it is said: Do you believe in the existence of the Almighty Creator or not? If they do not believe in His existence, then there is no point in discussing the miracles of the messengers with someone who does not believe in the One who sent them. The debate with such a person should initially focus on the existence of Allah; if they come to believe in His existence, then believing in miracles becomes

easier for them, and it will be easier for them to believe that the One who created the moon from nothing could split it into two, for example.

If they believe in His existence as a Jew or Christian: We say to them: You believe in the miracles that occurred through Moses or Jesus, peace be upon them, and what occurred through Muhammad ﷺ is of the same kind; indeed, the evidence for what has come in our religion is stronger than what is in your books, without a doubt.

The essence of this point: Any doubt in his ﷺ signs necessitates doubt in the signs of other prophets even more so.

**Secondly**: To the denier or skeptic, it is said: Do you believe in truthful narrations? If they say no, their argument falls because they are being deliberately obstinate. If they say yes, we tell them: The prophetic miracles are truthful narrations; you are obliged to believe in them. If they say: How do I know they are truthful? We say: How do you establish any narration as truthful? They can only say: The truthfulness of a narration is based on the truthfulness of its informer. We say: We have verified the truthfulness of the narrators of the prophetic miracles, we have evidence of their honesty, and we are ready to prove this; what remains is for you to approach the truth with an unbiased view.

The essence of this point: No news can be proven true by any means except that the news of the prophetic miracles can be proven by the same or similar or stronger means.

**Thirdly**: Only those who speak thoughtlessly debate the truth of the prophetic miracles, ignorant of the criteria for critiquing chains of narration and texts among Muslim scholars.

We are not talking about unanchored historical reports influenced by desires, ambitions, or political inclinations; our case is entirely different. Here, there is a precise scientific methodology that distinguished Muslims from other nations in scrutinizing narrators, authenticating sources, comparing narrations, and preferring among them. Thousands of volumes have been written on this over the ages, aiming to reach the truth without compromise; hence, hundreds of narrators were weakened, and their narrations were rejected, even though they included virtues and prophetic miracles, but they were rejected and not accepted because they did not pass the strict examination for accepting narrations.

The essence of this point: First, study the critical methodology of narrations in Islam; then discuss afterward!

**Fourthly**: The narrations of the prophetic miracles, in all their types, are Mutawatir (widely and consistently reported) in meaning, narrated by many narrators whose conspiracy to lie is impossible; thus, they provide necessary knowledge. Skepticism about Mutawatir narrations is a form of sophistry and corrupts knowledge and sciences.

To those who doubt the prophetic miracles - for the sake of argumentative opposition - I say: What would you say if it was told to you: I deny the existence of those you honor and praise, let alone the authenticity of their opinions; I deny the existence of Plato and Aristotle, and even Newton! I say: Attributing the three laws of motion to him is a figment of the imagination! I deny the existence of Darwin, and the theory of evolution is a fabrication about him! I doubt the existence of Einstein, and attributing the general theory of relativity to him is a lie upon lie! And do not tell me there are pictures of them; for I will say: Why couldn't they be fabricated or falsified, and history is written by the victors - as some mention!

If you say: This is absurd and sophistry, it is said: Yes, this is true; and so is denying the miracles of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ!

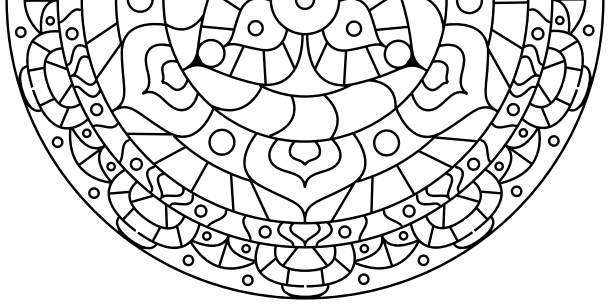
If you say: But the existence of those you mentioned and their theories are definitively established; it is said: Yes, and so are the prophetic miracles!

If you say: We possess evidence for what you doubt; it is said: Yes, and so do we have evidence for what you denied.

The essence of this point: Any evidence a denier of miracles uses to prove the authenticity of a report can similarly be used to prove the prophetic miracles.

*For further benefit*

I recommend reading the book: al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya by Ibn Kathir, from (volume 8, page 539) to (volume 9, page 310).



# Chapter Seven: Proofs of the Prophethood of Our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ *(Part Three)*

## The Fifth Proof: The Prophet's ﷺ Conditions in His Mission

The conditions of the Prophet ﷺ in his mission testify that he is truly a messenger from Allah, and it is completely inconceivable that he could be a false claimant - far be it from him - to this honor.

These conditions and situations are very numerous, and I will, with Allah's help, mention as much as feasible, and from the water, only enough to wet our lips will suffice.

## Examples of His ﷺ Conditions in His Mission:

**Firstly**: His ﷺ life was marked by humility and asceticism towards the worldly life, taking only what was necessary from it.

He would mend his own shoes, milk his sheep, and patch his clothes, not elevating himself despite being honored with prophethood and esteemed with the message.

He ate what was available, and sometimes he went to bed hungry, unable to find anything to eat, even tying a stone to his stomach from hunger. Three months would pass without a fire being lit in his house for cooking, and he never filled himself with barley bread until he died.

When he received wealth, he distributed it immediately and did not keep anything for himself. Jabir, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was never asked for anything to which he said 'no.'" Agreed upon (Bukhari: 6034, Muslim: 2311).

When he died ﷺ, he left behind no significant worldly possessions; even his armor was pawned to a Jew for thirty measures of barley.

Is this the condition of a false claimant to prophethood?! Reasonably, this is inconceivable; what prevented him from accumulating treasures, growing wealth, and building palaces?!

What does a false claimant to prophethood aspire to other than worldly glory and indulging in pleasures?!

He ﷺ was the furthest from this because he was truly a messenger from Allah.

**Secondly**: He ﷺ did not leave any inheritance for his family; not even a dinar or more! He ﷺ said: "We *[prophets]* do not leave inheritance; what we leave is charity. The family of Muhammad can only eat from this money (i.e., Allah's money), and they are not entitled to accumulate more than what is sufficient for their sustenance." (Bukhari: 3711, Muslim: 1759).

He did not appoint his family members to succession or governance, even though his uncle and his cousins were alive.

Would a false claimant be content to let his family live just getting by, while he could place them at the highest worldly ranks?!

Isn't this proof that he was truly a messenger from Allah?!

**Thirdly**: He ﷺ consistently denied everything that contradicted the core of his mission, which is the oneness of Allah and worshiping Him alone, even if it meant raising his status in the worldly perspective. Therefore, when a man said to him, "O Muhammad, you are our best and the son of our best, our master and the son of our master," he ﷺ said: "Say as you say and let not the devil entice you. I am Muhammad, the servant of Allah and His messenger. I do not like you to raise me above the status that Allah has granted me." Reported by Ahmad (13596).

When a man said, "What Allah wills and you will," he ﷺ said: "Are you making me equal to Allah?! Rather, what Allah alone wills." Reported by Ahmad (3247).

The sun eclipsed on the day his son Ibrahim died, and people said: The sun has eclipsed because of Ibrahim's death. He ﷺ said: "The sun and the moon are two signs among the signs of Allah; they do not eclipse for the death or life of anyone. So, when you see them, supplicate to Allah and pray until it is clear." (Bukhari:1060, Muslim:915).

If he ﷺ had been a false, claimant to prophethood - far be it from him - he would have been pleased with this incident and used it to elevate his status in the eyes of the ignorant. But he is the Messenger of Allah! Conveying His command.

**Fourthly**: He ﷺ was guarded by his companions until the verse was revealed: {And Allah will protect you from the people} *[Al-*

*Ma'idah: 67]*. Then he said to his guards: "O people, go back, for Allah has protected me." Reported by Tirmidhi (3046).

And he is the one whom the polytheists, Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians agreed upon in enmity, hatred, and ambush; yet he did not care for anyone, trusting in Allah, and informed everyone that his enemies would not reach him. Would he do this if he were not truly a prophet? Reason clearly indicates that only someone truthful in his claim of prophethood would do this.

**Fifthly**: The magnificent Quran, which reached the pinnacle of eloquence, clarity, and expression, was brought by the Prophet ﷺ stating: "This is the word of Allah; I have no role in it other than its conveyance and clarification." Allah, the Exalted, says: {And when Our clear verses are recited to them, those who do not expect to meet Us say, "Bring a Quran other than this or change it." Say, "It is not for me to change it on my own accord. I only follow what is revealed to me. Indeed, I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the punishment of a tremendous Day"} *[Yunus: 15]*.

If he were claiming falsely - far, be it from him ﷺ- he would have attributed the Quran to himself, for it would have been the ultimate in pride and raising his status in the eyes of people. What does a lying claimant seek other than glory and high status among people?!

Or at least claimed that he directly received the Quran from Allah without the mediation of Gabriel.

This alone is sufficient for those who are fair in proving that he is the truthful, the believed, peace be upon him.

**Sixthly**: The Quran frequently describes the Prophet ﷺ as a humble servant to his Lord, a human who possesses no power to benefit or harm himself or others. Allah, the Exalted, says: {Say, "I

am only a man like you, to whom revelation has come."} *[Al-Kahf: 110]*, and He says: {Say, "I do not possess for myself any benefit or harm except as Allah wills. And if I knew the unseen, I could have acquired much wealth, and no harm would have touched me. I am only a warner and a bringer of glad tidings to a people who believe"} *[Al-A'raf: 188]*. If he were falsely claiming prophethood ﷺ - far be it from him - why did he not claim a higher degree and greater rank for himself?!

**Seventhly**: The Prophet ﷺ is mentioned in the Quran only four times! While other prophets are mentioned many more times; Moses, peace be upon him, is mentioned by name (136) times! Abraham, peace be upon him, is mentioned (69) times! Noah is mentioned (43) times! And many other prophets are mentioned more frequently than him.

The question that naturally arises: If the Quran were fabricated by the Prophet ﷺ - far be it from him - would he do this?! Would a false prophet mention the names of other prophets many times - in a context of praise, commendation, and honor - and mention his own name only four times?!

Wouldn't a lying claimant to prophethood be expected to mention himself frequently and praise himself at the expense of other prophets, because this would elevate him in the eyes of his followers more? Isn't this what a claimant seeks?! Isn't this enough for the wise to testify that he who brought us this Quran is a truthful messenger?!

**Eighthly**: Revelation would be delayed during times of great need for it, such as during the incident of the slander (al-Ifk), a time of severe distress for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the Muslims, with hearts reaching the throats; a month or more passed with the hypocrites spreading rumors and slandering his honor ﷺ. What

prevented him - if he had been a false claimant to prophethood, fabricating revelation from himself - from stating a decisive word at the beginning to defend his honor, cutting off the tongues of the fabricators? Wouldn't it have been easy - if he were lying, far be it from him - to come out to the people with a word attributed to the Lord of the heavens, declaring his wife's innocence from the first day? But this did not happen because he ﷺ does not speak from desire, and he would not fabricate lies about people nor lie about Allah. So, may Allah bless him, his family, and his companions, and grant them peace.

## The lesson learned from all the foregoing:

The numerous situations and events in his mission ﷺ unequivocally lead the fair observer to conclude: It is impossible for these circumstances to emanate from someone falsely claiming prophethood.

Broaden your perspective, O fortunate one, in his biography, Sunnah, and life's instances, in family, missionary, political aspects, and beyond. Reflect on them with awareness, and every page of it will proclaim: Muhammad ibn Abdullah could only be a chosen prophet and a selected messenger ﷺ and grant him salvation.

## The Sixth Proof: The Perfection of the Sharia and Its Beauties

I confess my perplexity... Where should I begin? A vast ocean lies before me!

Had there been no other proof of the Prophet's ﷺ truthfulness in his prophethood but this gracious, pure Sharia that has illuminated and delighted the world, and blessed those who lived under its shade - it would have sufficed as a proof.

The religion of Islam is the most complete, superior, and noblest of religions, embodying beauties, majesty, and perfection, compelling any fair-minded person to attest to Allah's supreme wisdom, and to His messenger Muhammad ﷺ being truly His messenger and the truthful, the believed.

These beautiful sides encompass its foundations and branches, issues, and evidence; thus, becoming a guarantor for the happiness of both worlds. And Allah spoke the truth: {Indeed, Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His verses, and purifying them, and instructing them in the Book and wisdom, although before that they had been in manifest error} *[Ali 'Imran: 164]*.

The religion of Islam commands all that is right, acknowledges all that is true, and encourages the best of deeds, noble morals, and the welfare of the servants.

Its beliefs purify hearts, its morals refine souls, and its actions rectify conditions.

It came to reform religion and the world, harmonizing the interests of the spirit and the body, the individual and the community, giving everyone their due right.

Its core is faith in Allah, and its fruit is striving in everything He loves and approves of, urging towards justice, goodness, and mercy, and deterring from oppression, evil behavior, rejecting idolatries, superstitions, and dependence on created beings.

Its creed is simple, clear, rational, and natural, with no contradictions or obscurities.

It brought nothing that reason denies or that contradicts correct knowledge, thus being suitable for every time and place {Does He

who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Acquainted?} *[Al-Mulk: 14]*.

Its messages are truthful and consistent, its judgments are wise, and it has guided us to all beneficial knowledge, whether religious or worldly.

It is the religion of wisdom and nature, of mercy and kindness, encompassing all benefits in essentials, needs, and embellishments, commanding only what is purely good or predominantly beneficial, and forbidding only what is purely evil or whose harm outweighs its benefit. It quenches thirst, heals the sick, lights the way, and straightens one's life.

It harmonizes reason and revelation in its beliefs, acts of worship, and dealings. Nothing it commands makes reason wish it hadn't, and nothing it forbids makes reason wish it hadn't.

The Islamic Sharia calls upon the Muslim to strive and exert effort in this life, to travel the earth seeking Allah's bounty. It did not erect a barrier between religion and the world, but instead blended them, making them compatible.

It has broadened the scope of what is permissible. The default state of things and transactions is permissibility. Take what you wish, wear what you like, eat and drink as you please; trade, travel, learn, create, farm... do what you want, but avoid only what Allah has forbidden you, which is minimal compared to the permissible.

Islam is a religion of mercy and benevolence, encouraging compassion, gentleness, fulfilling needs, alleviating distress, and striving for perfection. It made knowledge, religion, governance, and authority mutually supportive.

It permitted all that is pure and beneficial and forbade all that is impure and harmful.

It prevented injustices, restored rights to their owners, set deterrent penalties for crimes to prevent their occurrence and mitigate their impact.

This upright religion even extends mercy, kindness, and consideration to animals, taking their feelings into account! It prohibits using animals merely as targets for killing. If you wish to hunt a bird merely for entertainment, Islam says no; the bird's life is more valuable than your amusement.

Islam prohibits using living creatures as chairs for sitting because it harms them, cursing them, or causing distress to birds by taking their chicks!

The jurisprudence of Shariah didn't overlook the right of sheep to be spared psychological torture; it forbids slaughtering one sheep in view of another, sharpening the knife in front of it, or cutting off a part of it after slaughter until its body goes cold.

It even remembered the right of silkworms! Jurists mandated that their owner must provide them with mulberry leaves, even if it means purchasing them, or release them to avoid their death; a small insect's life is respected in Islam!

Our jurisprudence didn't overlook the rights of bees; jurists decreed that the owner must leave some honey for them to feed on if it becomes necessary for their diet.

It didn't ignore the rights of milking animals; the jurisprudence of this law stated that the milker must trim his nails so as not to harm the animal's udder!

It is the compassionate Shariah that calls out to you: why harm an innocent animal?

If someone refrained from spending on his non-edible animal, the ruler would compel him to do so or to sell it; to prevent injustice towards it. If he couldn't afford it, it would be funded from the public treasury. This is the mercy of Islam!

Do you know of any religion or system that pays such attention to kindness towards animals?

And if this is how it treats animals, how then does it treat humans?

Islam has made people equal; no one is superior to another due to color, race, or lineage. The criterion for superiority is piety alone, {Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you} *[Al-Hujurat: 13]*.

It is the law of justice; justice in major and minor matters, it even ensures justice between your feet; it prohibited you from wearing one shoe without the other! The Prophet of Mercy ﷺ said: "None of you should walk wearing one shoe only; he should either wear both or take both off." (Bukhari: 5856, Muslim: 2097), and he said: "If the strap of one of your sandals breaks, do not walk in the other until you have repaired it." (Muslim 2098).

The Sharia aimed for everyone to receive their rightful share in the economy and for Muslim markets to be transparent and stable, prohibiting monopolization, deception, bidding up prices without intending to buy, and intercepting caravans before they reach the market.

This true Sharia established a unique ethical economic system unmatched by any other; search engines are at your disposal: read about the growth of Islamic banking today in Europe, the interest in its research in scientific centers and Western universities, and the strong belief forming that Islamic banking is an ethical investment and a safe haven for capital.

The Sharia of Islam is a law of justice and forgiveness with dignity. It does not say, "If someone hits you on your right cheek, turn to them the other cheek!" Instead, its guidance is: {And the recompense for an evil act is an evil one like it, but whoever forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah. Indeed, He does not like wrongdoers} *[Al-Shura: 40]*.

It is the Sharia of unity and concord, cutting off the causes of dispute; it prohibited the causes of hatred and severed relations, even to the extent of prohibiting a Muslim from proposing to a woman another Muslim has proposed to or underselling his brother.

It is a Sharia of cleanliness, order, beautiful manners, exquisite taste, and consideration for feelings; to the extent that it even prohibits two people from whispering without including a third, and even cleaning one's teeth is considered an act of worship! Using a miswak (tooth-stick) is among the first things recommended for a Muslim when entering his home. Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would start with the miswak when entering his home. Narrated by Muslim (253).

Truly, the Sharia of Islam encompasses noble morals and wonderful etiquettes; it prohibits backbiting, gossip, lying, mockery, arrogance, and envy, and encourages their opposites.

It is a Sharia of social solidarity; in addition to Zakat (obligatory charity) and Sadaqah (voluntary charity), it states that maintaining kinship ties is not limited to greetings, gifts, and visits only. Rather, those who are financially capable must spend on their poor relatives, and it is their right, not a favor! {And give the relative his right} *[Al-Isra: 26]*.

The Sharia grants significant rights to neighbors, to the extent that they were almost included in inheritance rights, not to

mention the rights of parents, children, spouses, widows, orphans, the needy, servants, guests, teachers, and students, and so on.

It is a complete Sharia that overlooks nothing concerning matters of religion or worldly affairs; with utmost precision and brilliant organization; from a person's relationship with his Lord, to his relationship with himself, to his relationship with others; whether human, animal, or inanimate.

It has clarified for the servant how to worship his Lord, and how to marry and divorce, how to buy and sell, lease and cultivate, how to seek justice and claim rights or testify in disputes. It has taught him how to eat and drink, sleep and wake up, and even how to wear his shoes!

It has organized how he interacts with people, greets them, and sits with them, leaving no peculiar nor harmful aspect without providing beautiful guidance and organization, without deficiency, flaw, or confusion, but rather perfection, happiness, and facilitation.

This Sharia has organized everything in your life for you, and even everything after your death; in inheritance, rights, and more. And Allah spoke the truth: {Then is it other than Allah I should seek as judge while it is He who has revealed to you the Book explained in detail?} *[Al-An'am: 114]*.

This is just a glimpse of the vastness, and otherwise, discussing this topic could be a long and delightful discourse that never tires[4].

The question remains: How did the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ produce all these brilliant, exquisite, complete, and precise

(4) In an upcoming chapter (Chapter Twenty - Our Need for Religion), there will be further elaboration and additional explanation for what has been mentioned here.

legislations? From relationships between states in peace and war, to wearing shoes, entering the bathroom, sitting manners, and even teaching children fine manners about seeking permission at three distinct times.

Where did all this come from, and how?

Today, when people want to develop a limited system for a minor aspect, they gather a group of experts to hold consecutive meetings over extended periods to draft the initial regulation and formulate it. Then, this is followed by review committees, only to discover loopholes and errors later, necessitating multiple amendments.

Here, you have a comprehensive, detailed, sufficient, flawless Sharia that encompasses all aspects of life, with no deficiency, distortion, or possibility of revision.

Could a single illiterate man - no matter how intelligent or cunning - organize every domain, solve every problem, and lay down the foundations of happiness in religion and life by himself?

Or does reason and fairness dictate that it must be said he was truthful, trustworthy, a messenger and a prophet, not speaking from his own desire but rather conveying revelation from Allah? May Allah exalt and grant peace to him, his family, and his companions.

## The Importance of Highlighting the Merits of Islam

It's beneficial to note that directing discourse towards non-Muslims by highlighting the virtues of Islam and the distinctiveness of its Sharia is among the most important means of invitation. It is perhaps the shortest path to their conversion and the most effective means of winning their hearts and convincing them of

Islam's truth and the Prophet's ﷺ veracity(5). This is a clear, easily understood evidence that can be felt as tangibly as with one's own hands, without needing to delve into chains of narrations or verify their authenticity.

Indeed, the virtues of this great religion have an amazing effect on the hearts of many disbelievers; thus, it's excellent to utilize this to its fullest.

Just as we need to clarify the merits of Sharia to non-Muslims, Muslims themselves are equally in need of this explanation.

Yes, they are Muslims and have grown up in this religion, but discussing the beauties of Sharia is to talk about Allah's blessings, and Allah says, {As for the favour of your Lord, report *[it]*} *[Al-Duha: 11]*. The greatest blessing that Allah has bestowed upon us, the Muslims, is this upright religion.

Moreover, this knowledge is a means to increase faith and strengthen conviction, as well as a reason for joy in being guided to this upright religion. Such joy is a form of worship that Allah loves; {Say, "In the bounty of Allah and in His mercy - in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate"} *[Yunus: 58]*.

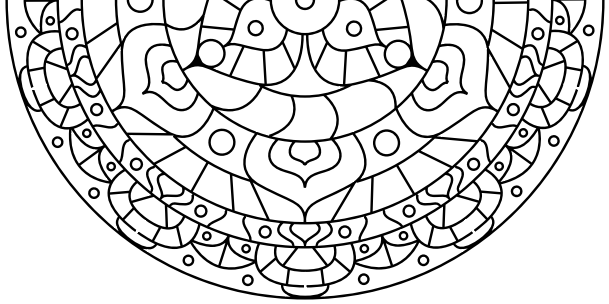
Some people might miss this because they neglect to reflect on the beauties of Islam and appreciate its splendor. Therefore, it is crucial to promote this topic and emphasize it, especially

(5) The evidence for this is too numerous to list, and as an illustrative example, I recall a true story that occurred in a Western country. It involves a maid who worked for a Muslim family. She was struck and impressed by the Muslims' cleanliness; when she washed their underwear, she found it free from stains of impurity, unlike those of her own people. This led her to admire their refined and beautiful religion, prompting her to inquire further with the family and ultimately embrace Islam.

in addressing the youth. It would be beneficial to pair this with demonstrating the state of ignorance both in ancient and modern times. If we aim to elevate them to adhere to this religion out of conviction, then they will take pride in their religion and exalt their Islam. By Allah's guidance, they will be protected from the winds of doubt.

### *For further benefit*

I recommend reading the book: "al-Durrah al-Mukhtasarah fi Mahasin al-Din al-Islami" by Shaikh Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him.



# Chapter Eight: Proofs of the Prophethood of Our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ *(Part Four)*

## The Seventh Proof: The Noble Quran

The Quran, the magnificent and noble book, is the greatest of the signs of Allah's Messenger, Muhammad bin Abdullah ﷺ. Allah Almighty said, {Is it not sufficient for them that We have sent down to you the Book which is recited to them? Indeed, in that is a mercy and a reminder for a people who believe} *[Al-Ankabut: 51]*. It suffices in calling to faith and clarification, and in argument and evidence. How could it not be so when it is the enduring proof through the ages, its wonders never ceasing, not wearing out from repetition, and scholars never grow tired of it? It is the criterion, not in jest. Whoever forsakes it from the tyrants, Allah will shatter him, and whoever seeks guidance other than it, Allah will lead him astray.

Indeed, the Quran is the greatest proof of all prophets, lasting through the ages and widespread across lands. The Prophet ﷺ

said, "Every prophet was given signs by which people believed, but what I have been given is Divine inspiration which Allah has revealed to me, so I hope to have the most followers on the Day of Resurrection."

This subject is so vast that no one can encompass it entirely; the entire Quran is miraculous. It is a compilation of miracles - its words, readings, composition, meanings, stories, and rulings; every chapter in it, indeed every verse, is a sea whose depths cannot be fathomed.

To touch briefly on its miraculous aspects, and to select a few flowers from its gardens, a few scents from its breezes.

Aspects of the Quran's Miracle:

**The first point**: Its eloquence, comprehensive meanings, and beautiful composition. It represents the pinnacle of eloquence and the height of articulation. {A Book whose verses have been detailed, an Arabic Qur'an for a people who know} *[Fussilat: 3]*. It's a vast field that cannot be fully explored.

True is the description that says, "It has sweetness, and its top is fruitful, and its bottom is abundant. It dominates and is not dominated, and it breaks what is beneath it."

From its opening to its closing, not a verse in the Quran is devoid of a subtle point or beneficial wisdom, a compelling argument, or phrases that captivate and bewilder minds with their beauty and eloquence.

The Quran's composition and style are utterly unique and marvelous; it is not akin to any known forms of speech, and no one has brought a style like it. It is not poetry, rhymed prose, oratory, or like any human discourse, Arab or non-Arab.

It is the speech of Allah, and it could only be from Allah. Allah is unlike His creation, so His speech is unlike the speech of His creation.

**The second point**: Its meanings are fully expressed in brief words, with beautiful speech and perfect expression(6). Consider the verse, {And therein is whatever the souls desire and *[wherein]* the eyes find pleasure} *[Al-Zukhruf: 71]*, where some have said that these two phrases encompass all that could be described about Paradise in detail by all of creation combined!

Reflect on the verse, {And We inspired to the mother of Moses, "Suckle him; but when you fear for him, then cast him into the river and do not fear and do not grieve. Indeed, We will return him to you and will make him *[one]* of the messengers"} *[Al-Qasas: 7]*, where in a single verse, it combines two commands, two prohibitions, two pieces of news, and two glad tidings!

And consider His saying: {And there is life for you in legal retribution} *[Al-Baqarah: 179]*, which contains a profound meaning with few words.

It is narrated that an Arab heard someone reciting: {So proclaim what you are commanded} *[Al-Hijr: 94]*, and he couldn't help but fall to the ground and prostrate! When asked about his prostration, he said: "I prostrated at this moment for the eloquence of this speech."

A man heard a reciter reading: {So when they despaired of him, they conferred in private} *[Yusuf: 80]* and said: "I testify that

(6) Some of the examples in this section are hard to convey in another language than Arabic since it requires an understanding of the Arabic language and how eloquent the verses in the Quran really are. (Translators note).

a creature cannot produce speech like this." And there are many examples of this.

**The third point**: It contains arguments and proofs; it presents conclusive, certain evidence and sound logical deductions, refuting all contenders and silencing every adversary.

Indeed, our Lord said: {And We have certainly presented for the people in this Quran from every *[kind of]* example that they might remember. An Arabic Quran, without any deviation that they might become righteous} *[Az-Zumar: 27 - 28]*.

**The fourth point**: It includes stories of past generations and tales of previous nations. For instance, consider the challenge posed by the People of the Book regarding the story of the People of the Cave, the account of Moses and Khidr, and the narrative of Dhul-Qarnayn, which matched what their prophets mentioned and what their scriptures contained.

**The fifth point**: It encompasses matters of the unseen; it contains reports that were informed would occur and did occur, like His saying to the Jews: {So wish for death if you should be truthful} *[Al-Jum'ah: 6]*, and then He said: {And they will never wish for it, ever, because of what their hands have put forth. And Allah is Knowing of the wrongdoers} *[Al-Baqarah: 95]*. And no one among them ever wished for it.

And His decree for Abu Lahab and his wife to be in the fire before their death; so, they died disbelievers.

And His saying: {Soon will the multitude be routed, and they will show their backs} *[Al-Qamar: 45]*, which occurred on the day of Badr.

And His saying about the Romans: {And after their defeat, they will soon overcome} *[Al-Rum: 3 - 4]*, which happened as He informed, among many other verses and examples already mentioned.

This is proof that the mind can only submit to the fact that the one who spoke the Quran is the All-Knowing, the All-Aware. {It is not possible for this Quran to have been produced by anyone other than Allah} *[Yunus: 37]*.

**The sixth point**: It reveals the secrets of hearts, which only the Knower of the Unseen could know. Reflect on His saying: {And you would wish for death if you were truthful} *[Al-Anfal: 7]*, or His statement: {When two factions among you were about to lose courage} *[Ali 'Imran: 122]*, which indeed happened, without any outward expression of failure or retreat from them.

**The seventh point**: Its words combine majesty with ease; its style is lofty yet clear and understandable; it encompasses grandeur and sweetness. Its lofty language does not become difficult, nor does its simple language become vulgar. When both are present, they are natural and harmonious, unlike any other form of speech.

Indeed, you will never find speech more eloquent, more profound, or more delightful than its words, nor will you see a composition more beautifully structured and harmoniously crafted than its structure.

As for its meanings: Every person of intellect attests to its superiority in all fields and its ascent to the highest ranks. It came with the most eloquent words, in the best arrangement, embodying the soundest of meanings. None have these three attributes combined except in the speech of the All-Knowing, the Wise.

**The eighth point**: Its recitation possesses qualities found nowhere else: the delicacy of its pronunciation, the beauty of its presentation, the fluidity of its composition, its pleasant reception, the fact that its reader does not tire, and its listener does not grow weary, which is absent in other forms of speech.

How often does a Muslim listen to the Quran? Every day, perhaps repeating a particular passage many times over; never finding in it a moment of boredom. Should he give his listening the due diligence of contemplation, he would find, in every instance, a benefit or wisdom not realized until that moment as though he hears these words for the first time. And true is the one who said in verse:

*All books, when read, may lead to weariness,*

*To boredom or a dullness, no less.*

*Except this Book, for within its embrace*

*lies wonders, never tiring till the end of days.*

**The ninth point**: It is conveyed in preserved words and entrusted meanings. Muslims have memorized it in their hearts and recorded it in their scriptures. Not a single word has been lost, no meaning has been confused, and its arrangement has not been altered. Thus, it is safeguarded from error and protected from alteration. Generations continue to preserve it as it is, and tongues, despite the diversity of languages, recite it in its original composition and characteristics. It remains unchanged with the passing of time, unaltered by the distances of places, and consistent despite the variety of languages. And true is what Allah said: {Indeed, it is We who sent down the Quran and indeed, We will be its guardian} *[Al-Hijr: 9]*.

**The tenth point**: Its ease on all tongues, such that even non-Arabs have memorized it, and it flows in their speech. No other book is memorized as it is, nor do tongues recite any other text as they do with it. It is even easy for illiterate elders or the elderly to

recite it, despite their inability to read other texts. This is due to the divine qualities with which it has been uniquely endowed(7).

**The eleventh point**: The combination of its diverse meanings and their harmony. It transitions within a surah from promises to warnings, from encouragement to discouragement, from past to future, from stories to parables, from judgments to debates, without becoming disjointed or contradictory.

**The twelfth point**: Some of its stories are repeated with different words and varied expressions. A contemplative person would realize that underneath these repetitions lie secrets and subtleties that astonish the mind.

**The thirteenth point**: The inability of nations to challenge it. Our Lord challenged them to produce something like it, or ten chapters like it, or even a single chapter like it. They retreated from challenging it, refrained from matching it, and swallowed the bitterness of incapacity despite their zeal, pride, and eloquence; for the language is theirs and speech is theirs, yet they were silenced! They did nothing but deceive themselves with slander

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(7) I know an elderly woman, may Allah have mercy on her, who was illiterate. She entered a Qur'an memorization school in her old age; Allah made it easy for her to learn to read the Qur'an and memorize what she could. She would open the Mus'haf and read from it as she wished, but if you brought her any other book, she would not be able to read a single letter from it!

I also met a brother in one of the countries who has memorized the entire Qur'an. His recitation is among the most melodious, and he leads people in prayer as an Imam. Yet, I could not speak to him except through a translator, because he does not know any Arabic! And true is what Allah said: {And We have certainly made the Qur'an easy for remembrance} *[Al-Qamar: 17]*.

and denial: {And they said, "Legends of the former peoples which he has written down, and they are dictated to him morning and afternoon"} *[Al-Furqan: 5]*. Despite knowing that their companion is unlettered, without anyone to dictate or write for him, it is stubbornness, ignorance, and incapacity. If they had found a way to challenge it with something that matched its eloquence and articulateness, they would have done so, but it is impossible; its bonds are secured, its facts are consistent, its minute and significant aspects are perfected, both its much and its little are impenetrable, {Or do they say, "He invented it?" Rather, they do not believe. So let them produce a statement like it, if they should be truthful"} *[Al-Tur: 33 - 34]*.p

It is impossible for someone to produce speech on their own and then challenge all of humanity to oppose even the simplest part of it – just three verses out of thousands – and then for all creation to fail in doing so! This can only be a revelation from Allah.

Some may say that it has been reported that some people attempted to challenge the Qur'an!

The answer: Yes, history has recorded a few names, which can be counted on one hand of those who attempted to challenge the Qur'an and were met with failure!

It should not be forgotten that clear truth is agreed upon by all people, and then one, two, or three individuals out of millions may stubbornly dispute it, but their obstinacy in it is one of the aspects by which it is established and prevails.

Meaning, the challenge that was made is for someone to bring a book like it in terms of its eloquence and articulateness; this has never happened, nor will it ever occur.

Those who attempted to challenge it only provided the strongest evidence of its truth, for they brought forth content so crude that sensible people would be embarrassed to hear it and would judge its awkwardness and ugliness. It is like someone who displayed a fragrance never smelled by anyone before and challenged all creation to produce even a tiny amount of perfume like it, only for the foolish to bring a rotten, vile stench and claim, "We have brought something like what you brought." Does this do anything but reinforce the strength and proof of what was brought, its greatness and majesty?

This is like what was reported about Musaylimah the Liar who attempted to challenge the Qur'an with sayings like, "O frog, croak away, you do not muddy the water, nor do you deny the drink!"

It is also narrated that he said: "The scatterers scatter wheat, the grinders grind it, the kneaders knead dough, the bakers bake bread, and the eaters eat it, ladling butter and fat!"

And it is told about him - and similarly about others - he said: "The elephant, what is the elephant? It has a tail and a trunk, and a long proboscis. For that is among the minor creations of our Lord!"

Glory be to my great Lord! Is this, the most trivial and foolish of speech, to be compared with the most noble, eloquent, and sublime of speech? Where is the pearl compared to the pebble, where is the clarity compared to the murkiness! And truly, our Lord in His majesty said, {Say: "If mankind and the jinn gathered in order to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like of it, even if they were to each other assistants"} *[Al-Isra: 88]*.

In addition to what has been mentioned before, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ declared to all creation at the beginning of the challenge to produce something like it, that they would never be able to do so, {But if you do not - and you will never be able

to -} *[Al-Baqarah: 24]*. A liar is too weak to dare such boldness! This can only be undertaken with knowledge free of doubt, based on revelation from Allah Almighty. Otherwise, human knowledge and capability are too weak for this.

**The fourteenth point**: It is a book of similarity; its parts resemble each other, and it corroborates itself, while being free from errors, deficiencies, contradictions, or differences, {Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or from behind it; *[it is]* a revelation from a Wise, Praiseworthy} *[Fussilat: 42]*.

No one, despite the numerous enemies lying in wait for Muslims, has been able to prove a single error in the Quran, or a deficient piece of information, or anything contradictory or conflicting, {Had it been from *[any]* other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction} *[al-Nisa: 82]*.

**The fifteenth point**: The previous verse itself is a miracle; such a method of challenge is not human nature, as some say, it's like a student entering an exam and writing at the end of his paper to the examiner: I dare you to find a single mistake in my answers! No one does this because it will make the examiner spend his night searching for a mistake to find it; but this is how the Quran challenges the opposers!

**The sixteenth point**: It included several correct cosmic scientific facts, which were only discovered recently, what is known in contemporary language as scientific miracles.

**Firstly**, I would like to clarify that the Quran did not come down to be a book of chemistry, physics, or astronomy; rather, it is a book of guidance and reform. However, it did include a healthy number of proofs and signs that guide minds and hearts to the realization that it truly is the word of Allah Almighty, {We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves

until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth} *[Fussilat: 53]*. Perhaps one of the wisdoms in including some of these signs in the Quran is to establish proof against a group of people who only care about empirical scientific research; hence, they see its wonders before them.

This great Quran included several truths that people only came to know a few years ago; how could this be if it were not a revelation from the All-Knowing, the Almighty? The fact that these significant and precise truths were expressed by a man who had no familiarity with such sciences, at a time when these sciences had not advanced, is evidence that he received them from the All-Knowing, the All-Aware, {Say, "It is revealed by the One who knows the secret in the heavens and the earth"} *[Al-Furqan: 6]*.

So, tell me:

- How did the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ know about the fierce waves in the deep sea fourteen centuries ago? That complete darkness prevails in its depths, given that he never sailed the sea at all, as Allah says: {Or *[they are]* like darknesses within an unfathomable sea which is covered by waves, upon which are waves, over which are clouds - darknesses, some of them upon others. When one puts out his hand *[therein]*, he can hardly see it} *[Al-Nur: 40]*. Sea waves starting from after seventy meters: this was unknown to humanity until about a hundred years ago, and beyond six hundred meters inside the sea, darkness becomes absolute; if he extends his hand, he can hardly see it. Who descended to these depths 1400 years ago?! It's impossible for a human to dive more than thirty meters in the sea; their body cannot bear it!

It is noteworthy here to mention the story of Gary Miller - the priest who converted to Islam - in his book (The Amazing Quran) about the sailor who read the Quran and was impressed by its

precise description of storms at sea; then, when he learned that the man who brought this Quran lived in the desert and had never sailed the sea: he converted to Islam!

- From where did the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ know about the stages of human development in the womb within three darknesses? He who had never studied medicine or anatomy, as Allah says: {He creates you in the wombs of your mothers, creation after creation, within three darknesses} *[Al-Zumar: 6]*. It's also interesting what Dr. Miller mentioned about Dr. Keith Moore - the embryology scientist at the University of Toronto - who was invited several decades ago to Riyadh, and some Muslims showed him the verses related to embryo development; he later admitted to Dr. Miller that some of this information mentioned in the Quran about this topic was only discovered about thirty years ago! In fact, he revised a new edition of his book (Before We Are Born) based on this information.

- From where did the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ an illiterate who neither read nor wrote, know that there is a precise barrier between the two seas? Allah says: {And it is He who has let free the two seas: one palatable and sweet, and the other salt and bitter; and He has set a barrier and a complete partition between them} *[Al-Furqan: 53]*. These are the water barriers between saltwater and freshwater that were discovered in this modern era.

This is just a glimpse of the Quran on this topic, guiding fair minds to the truth that it is indeed the word of Allah, and that the messenger who was sent with it, Muhammad ﷺ spoke the truth.

**The seventeenth point**: The sublimity of its legislation, the perfection of its rules, covering all aspects of life, bringing benefits and warding off harms, with a unique ethical constitution, and an exquisite educational approach, as has been detailed previously.

There is no doubt that the miraculous nature of the Quran's meanings is greater and more extensive than the miraculous nature of its wording, and all the wise men of nations are incapable of bringing meanings like those of the Quran, greater than the incapability of Arabs in bringing something like its wording.

**The eighteenth point**: Everyone finds what they are looking for in it and discovers in it what astonishes them.

Everyone can draw from the fountain of this Quran useful knowledge; where the physician or physicist finds something amazing, as does the linguist find something astonishing, as well as the literary scholar, and specialists in psychology, sociology, education, astronomy, etc.

Comprehensive beneficial sciences and comprehensive sublime rulings, sufficient and healing, {And the word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice} *[Al-An'am: 115]*.

**The nineteenth point**: It conforms to human reason and natural disposition (al-Fitrah), and thus, whoever hears its verses with fairness and understands them, submits to them as logical and acceptable, as there is nothing in the Quran that is too complex for minds to reject or for one's innate nature to be repelled by.

**The twentieth point**: It encompasses all rules comprehensively in general, and specifically in important matters, fulfilling His statement, {An explanation of all things} *[Al-Nahl: 89]*.

**The twenty-first point**: Its amazing effect on souls, as Allah says: {If We had sent down this Quran upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of Allah} *[Al-Hashr: 21]*. And He says: {Allah has sent down the best statement: a consistent book wherein is reiteration. The skins shiver thereof of

those who fear their Lord; then their skins and their hearts relax at the remembrance of Allah} *[Al-Zumar: 23]*.

No one listens to it and empties their heart for it without finding a significant effect on themselves. No matter how much a servant reads it, it does not wear out with repetition; its effects renew in the souls, so glory be to Allah the Great! It is the rain that revives hearts, bringing forth the fruits of noble character and righteous deeds. {Indeed, this Quran guides to that which is most straight} *[Al-Isra: 9]*. Not to mention that it is a cure for physical and spiritual ailments.

These are some proofs that demonstrate that this Quran is truly the word of Allah Almighty, and Allah's truth: {And this Quran is not such that could ever be produced by other than Allah} *[Yunus: 37]*, {Nor could they produce it; indeed, they are truthful}, {And We sent down the Quran in truth, and in truth it has descended} *[Al-Isra: 105]*.

Therefore, it is the greatest evidence of the truthfulness of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

## Who Benefits From the Guidance and the Breezes of the Quran?

The doors of knowledge and faith in the Quran only open to those who read it seeking goodness.

Take this as a rule: the more you give yourself to contemplating the Quran with sincerity and a desire for goodness, the more its breezes will envelop you!

This too is among the aspects of its miraculous nature; it is one speech, yet it is a cause for some people's guidance and others' misery, as Allah Almighty says: {It is guidance and healing for those

who believe; for those who do not believe, there is heaviness in their ears, and it is blindness for them} *[Fussilat: 44]*.

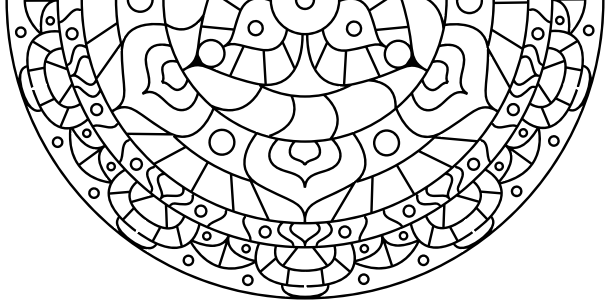
And indeed, our Lord speaks the truth when He says: {And indeed, it is a book of greatness} *[Fussilat: 41]*, for its greatness lies in that the goodness within it is only attainable by those who approach it with humility and a desire for the truth. For them, springs of knowledge, guidance, and faith burst forth. As for those who hold their noses high, arrogantly turning away, they only become further blinded {a fitting recompense} *[Al-Naba': 26]*.

I ask Allah, the Exalted, to make us among the people of the Quran, to make it the spring of our hearts and the light of our chests, the dispeller of our sorrows and the remover of our worries, and to make it an argument for us, not against us. Indeed, our Lord is the Hearer of supplication.

## *For further benefit*

I recommend reading:

- Al-Naba' al-Adhim, by Dr. Muhammad Abdullah Draz, which is beneficial in its field; it affirms the Quranic source and that it is truly the word of Allah.
- The Amazing Quran by Dr. Gary Miller.



# Chapter Nine:
# The Problem of Evil

One of the pillars of faith is the belief that everything is by the decree of Allah, encompassed within His knowledge, writing, will, and creation, whether it is good or evil. Nothing escapes the decree of Allah.

Just as goodness is by Allah's decree, so is evil. Therefore, all forms of evils, trials, calamities, and sins occur by Allah's decree; He has known that they would happen, inscribed them in the Preserved Tablet, willed them, and created them.

The existence of evil in creation is something that puzzles some people; they ask: How can Allah create something with evil in it, even though He does not love it?

I will strive to clarify this issue and answer this question with the help of Allah by presenting six principles. Understanding these principles should make the matter easier to comprehend, by the will of Allah.

**The first principle**: Evil is not attributed to Allah, neither in action nor attribute. Evil is in His creation, not in His act of

creation, and in the effects separate from Him, not in His acts inherent to Him.

How can evil be attributed to His essence or His attributes and actions when He is the Holy, the Pure, free from any imperfection? And how can that be when Allah is on a straight path: {Indeed, my Lord is on a straight path} *[Hud: 56]*. His actions are all just, and His decrees, both cosmic and legislative, are all wise.

How can evil be attributed to Allah when the most knowledgeable of creation about Him, ﷺ, said: "And evil does not pertain to You." Reported by Muslim (771), meaning it does not come from Him nor does He do it. Instead, all His actions are inherently good, wise, and beneficial.

**The second principle**: There is no pure evil in Allah's creation, nor is there predominantly evil. What exists in creation is either pure good or predominantly good.

Every creation in this universe is either pure good, like the prophets, peace be upon them, and angels, or there is predominant good in its existence; for Allah created these things which contain some evil, and He established a type of good that is more dominant. Therefore, the creation of these entities is wisdom.

**The third principle**: Evil in Allah's creation is relative and not absolute, meaning it is considered evil in its context or to those affected by it, even though with its existence, there is good from another perspective or for others, immediately or eventually, in this life or the hereafter.

Understanding this helps to grasp some of Allah's great wisdom in decreeing the existence of various forms of evil and calamities in this universe, as undoubtedly, it results in significant benefits,

and for this reason, the existence of these things is more beloved to Allah than their non-existence.

**The fourth principle**: The good in Allah's creation far outweighs the evil. This is perceivable with the slightest contemplation.

Out of Allah's mercy for His servants - and His mercy encompasses everything - the good and bliss in this universe are far more than the evils and calamities; everyone knows that the healthy are more than the sick, and safety from volcanoes, earthquakes, fires, plane crashes, car accidents, etc., is far more common than their occurrence. Therefore, the good in this universe is many times more than the evil, which cannot be denied by anyone who is just.

**The fifth principle**: The aspects of good in evil may or may not be apparent. That is, we might see some of the good resulting from the existence of evils and calamities, and sometimes it might be hidden from us. This discussion pertains to Allah's wisdom, which is broader than can be comprehended by the intellect of the created.

Hence, wisdom may or may not be apparent, and its invisibility does not negate its existence; for not knowing about an existing thing does not deny its existence, and not knowing about it is not knowledge of its non-existence. Therefore, the wisdom behind the creation of evil exists, but due to the limitations of our intellects and understandings, what is revealed to us is only a fraction, and much remains hidden. We infer what we do not know from what we know.

**The sixth principle**: Evil in Allah's creation is intended for other than itself, not for its own sake. Allah willed the existence of what He dislikes in evils for the sake of what results from it that He loves; He decreed what He dislikes for the achievement of what

He loves, and the achievement of what He loves is more beloved to Him than its absence.

The principle here is: "Missing out on predominant good is a predominant evil."

The wise person understands the value of achieving a predominant benefit even if it is accompanied by some harm. For example, bitter medicine may be unpleasant to the drinker from one aspect, but it is beneficial by Allah's will from another aspect.

## Answering the Problem of Evil

There's a doubt raised by the enemies of Allah, the atheists, aimed at confusing the believers, known as the problem of evil or the dilemma of evil.

This doubt has caused confusion, and perhaps something greater in some people. The enemies of Allah are keen on spreading it due to its effect on the ignorant and those weak in knowledge and faith, to the extent that it's said the problem of evil is the central argument of atheists! Therefore, it's crucial for a Muslim to understand how to refute this doubt for themselves and others.

In essence, they criticize the existence of Allah due to the presence of evil; they argue: If a capable, merciful Creator existed, evil would not exist in this universe – such disasters, epidemics, calamities, diseases, injustice, and so forth. Hence, the existence of evil is proof of the Creator's non-existence; otherwise, why hasn't He removed it?

This flawed argument is what they diligently use to deceive the ignorant, and I will mention eight concise responses to help understand this topic and clear the doubt by Allah's will.

**The first answer:** Is to acknowledge the existence of evil in this world but not to concede that it is pure or gratuitous evil. Rather, the types of calamities, evils, injustices, and so forth, have resulting goods and benefits that necessarily follow their existence. The wise Creator has decreed their existence for the goods and benefits they entail, which is logically acceptable.

Thus, the evil present in this universe, though it may be evil from one perspective, is good from another. Every mentioned instance of evil leads to greater goods; therefore, wisdom necessitates their existence rather than their absence.

For example, the water that is said to cause great floods, destroying and corrupting towns, is the same water that brings about great benefits. It is the same water that people need for drinking, cleaning, enjoyment, and many other things.

Therefore, the existence of water results in much good and little evil. The evil that occurs is enveloped in wisdom and benefits, some of which are recognized by those who look with an eye of fairness.

Similarly, the fire said to cause corruption is the same fire that people have greatly benefited from in their lives, far more than the occasional damage it causes.

Thus, for all things referred to as containing evil, we say that their existence leads to greater and greater goods. Therefore, wisdom dictates the existence of some evil, and its presence does not imply - as they claim - the non-existence of the Creator, the Exalted.

**The second answer**: Evil in this world is part of the overall goodness of the world, and the perspective should be holistic, not partial. We make a grave mistake if we restrict our view to just a small part, instead of looking at the whole picture. If you stood in front of a beautiful painting and focused only on a small line of it,

you wouldn't see its beauty. But, if you looked at it in its entirety, you would recognize its beauty and excellence.

Similarly, the existence of these evils in the world is part of the beauty that will appear to you if you look at the entirety of the world. What value does health have if we never knew sickness? What value does wealth have if we never knew poverty? What value does success have if there were no effort and hardship?

Imagine life without any misfortunes, obstacles, or difficulties; it would be a bland life, lacking color and flavor. We understand the goodness of things by their opposites, "Opposites reveal the beauty of each other." We wouldn't recognize a straight line if we didn't know what a crooked one was. "It is through opposites that things become clear."

In short, the existence of misfortunes, trials, and various forms of evil is necessary for the world's beauty. The beauty of a magnificent palace includes the existence of a bathroom, a place for urine, feces, and foul odors. Without it, the palace would lack completeness and lose part of its beauty. This is how we should view the matter.

**The third answer**: Claiming that the evil in this universe is gratuitous and lacks any benefit, as atheists assert, is untenable because it requires comprehensive knowledge, which humans lack. To assert that the existing evil brings no benefit whatsoever, either immediately or in the long term, one would need encompassing knowledge, which is contrary to reality; our knowledge is limited and insufficient.

For instance, from a distance, if someone sees two individuals holding a child with a saw, preparing to cut off the child's leg, it's unreasonable and unfair to judge the situation as good or evil based solely on that observation without understanding the context. They could be criminals, or it could be a doctor and the

child's father, where the child suffers from a condition that, if not treated by amputating the leg, could lead to death. In this case, wisdom and mercy dictate the amputation for the child's survival, which is a good outcome.

Thus, if someone claims that the existing evil in the world serves no beneficial purpose, we must say to them that such a claim requires an all-encompassing understanding of reality, which is unattainable, {And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little} *[Al-Isra: 85]*.

**The fourth answer**: To atheists who argue that the existence of evil negates the existence of Allah is to say: What about the existence of good? Shouldn't that be considered evidence of Allah's existence? Good is fundamental and more abundant, while evil is rare and incidental; health is more common than sickness, the number of people outside hospitals far exceeds those within, and safety from accidents, earthquakes, and volcanoes is much more common than their occurrence, a fact agreed upon by rational thinkers.

Again, I say: They argue that the existence of disease disproves the existence of Allah; what about the existence of health? Why isn't the prevalence of health considered proof of Allah's existence? Why is one considered evidence, and not the other?

Furthermore, a person with a leg injury, for example, what about the rest of their body parts? They possess countless cells functioning harmoniously, and many other healthy organs performing their functions. If one leg is injured, their heart, liver, intestines, brain, hand, blood vessels, etc., are all healthy. So, when one aspect is weighed against a hundred or more, which should be considered more significant? Obviously, the majority should prevail.

Therefore, all atheists are unable to address what might be termed, for the sake of argument, the "problem of good." That is,

if they use the problem of evil as an argument, we pose to them an even greater challenge to their belief system—the problem of good! Since good is far more abundant, why don't they deduce the existence of a merciful, generous, wise Creator from the abundance of good? Their denial, after all this, is nothing but a manifestation of desire and blindness.

**The fifth answer**: There's no necessity for the perfection of the creator to imply the perfection of the creation. The existence of imperfect creation doesn't necessitate an imperfect creator; it might be that the creator intentionally made it imperfect. Therefore, the imperfection of the creation doesn't imply the imperfection of the creator, much less prove the non-existence of the creator! This is where atheists err: they infer the non-existence of the creator from the imperfection of the creation, abandoning reason and understanding.

Let's consider an example: If someone enters a highly quality and beautifully designed palace with dozens of well-furnished, perfectly colored, and impeccably organized rooms, and then finds one messy, poorly colored room not matching the rest of the palace's beauty, would anyone claim that the palace's builder is foolish or lacking intelligence, let alone say that the existence of this messy room proves the palace has no builder? Rather, the perfection seen in the rest of the palace would attest to the builder's precision and taste, and the existence of the messy room would be attributed to a rational reason, perhaps it's meant as a punishment area, a storage space, or something else.

The essence of this example is that even the most foolish wouldn't claim upon seeing the beautiful palace and one ugly room that the palace has no builder. Yet, the atheist, upon seeing a vast, perfectly ordered, beautiful universe with some instances of misfortune and trials, claims the universe has no creator!

Another example: If there are two cell phones made by the same company, one of high quality and many features that impress everyone, and the other of lower quality and fewer features, made so for a commercial purpose. Then someone claims, upon seeing them, that there's no manufacturer for either because one is imperfect, concluding both came from nothing!

Would any sane person, or even a madman, utter such a thing? This is precisely the atheists' situation! They pick an example or two, or ten, or a hundred from this world where imperfections or misfortunes occur, in contrast to millions and millions of instances showing the perfection of creation and mercy towards beings, and then claim, due to those imperfections, that this universe has no creator. Is this the reasoning of the rational?

The correct logic states that the existence of imperfection does not negate the presence of wisdom, and the imperfection of the created does not imply the imperfection of the creator, much less his non-existence!

In summary, Allah Almighty willed this worldly life to be as such, with many goods and relatively fewer evils, and He has profound wisdom for both. He also willed the afterlife to contain a realm of pure bliss and continuous pleasures, where souls desire and eyes delight, and another realm of misery and severe punishment – Allah forbid we end there. Anyone who has tasted a bit of pleasure and pain in this world can somewhat grasp the meaning of what awaits in the afterlife, despite the vast difference between the experiences in this life and the next.

**The sixth answer**: The atheists' argument based on what they deemed "the problem of evil" is fundamentally flawed and astonishingly paradoxical! According to them, everything is

materialistic, composed merely of atoms that by chance collided to form this universe without a creator!

Consequently, there's no purpose, wisdom, feelings, good, evil, nor any fixed standard for ethics or discerning right from wrong.

How then can they argue about evil? And what exactly is their standard for evil in the first place?

How can they judge that this is evil, or this is correct, and that is not? What is their standard? They advocate for moral relativism, even moral nihilism!

The distinction between truth and falsehood, good and evil, is only possible for those who believe in a wise creator who instilled in hearts an innate nature that differentiates between these concepts, recognizing the goodness of virtue and the ugliness of evil.

Meaning, if we want to say there is good and there is evil, right and wrong, we must transcend material things; such judgments cannot be the outcome of the evolutionary theory they believe in. This understanding can only arise if we acknowledge a creator God who instilled this natural disposition in hearts to differentiate between right and wrong. Based on their principles, everything is equal with no distinction; it's the same whether you feed and treat an orphan well or kill and dismember him! There's no difference between a lawful marriage and rape; in the atheistic legal view, they're the same.

To them, life is entirely materialistic... Materialism and nothing beyond, devoid of purpose, meaning, wisdom, feelings, emotions, or morals.

So, how can atheists then use the problem of evil as an argument? According to their view, there's essentially no concept of good or evil to begin with! This makes their objection dead on arrival.

**The seventh answer**: Atheists' argument essentially reveals their flawed concept of the Lord. The idea that the Lord is a creator with vast knowledge and wisdom, possessing power and dignity, who does what He wishes, decrees what He wants, and everyone is a humble servant to Him, doesn't exist for them.

Do you know their concept of the Lord? In short, they want or imagine a god that's merely a servant or a machine (exalted is our Lord), a device that does what they program it to do, or a servant who obeys their commands. Thus, the existence of trials and difficulties puzzles them!

Because they want a god who does nothing but fulfill their desires, shower them with pleasures, and if they desire only pleasures in their world, he must give them what they want without any trouble! And if they encounter the slightest hardship, even a thorn pricking them, they rush to deny His existence!

Is this truly the Lord? Exalted is Allah far above such notions.

The Lord does what He wills and decrees what He desires. He owns dignity and pride, and the servant is just that; whether they understand the wisdom behind His actions and decrees or not, they remain a servant to their Lord unequivocally.

**The eighth and last answer**: This world is created for trial and testing, not for ultimate bliss and happiness. As mentioned in the Quran, {He who created death and life to test you *[as to]* which of you is best in deed} *[Al-Mulk: 2]*. Therefore, if this life is not meant for sheer happiness and is not the final destination, it is unreasonable to expect the fulfillment of every type of pleasure or the elimination of all sorrows here; there is another realm, meant for pure happiness, for those who respond to their Lord.

The issue with their perspective is that it is limited to this worldly life, being content and secure within it, without aspiring for what lies beyond. Anyone who believes in a life after this one - the true life as mentioned in the Quran, {And indeed, the Hereafter is the true life if only they knew} *[Al-Ankabut: 64]*- will see all related problems disappear. They will understand that the trials and tribulations of this life serve a divine wisdom and that there are rewards and generous compensation in the afterlife for those who patiently endure their trials.

This worldly life is merely moments and seconds compared to the eternal life of the hereafter, which is everlasting. Thus, if a person falls ill, suffers, is tested, or faces poverty, and then patiently perseveres, submits to their Lord, they will receive a great compensation in the hereafter. So, where lies the issue? When we weigh this matter with reason, it becomes entirely rational.

If a wealthy person said, "Whoever endures the pain of a pinch will receive a spacious house, a luxurious car, and a lot of money," who would refuse such a tempting offer? All types of calamities in this world, when compared to the reward for enduring them in the afterlife, are less significant than this pinch. The promised delights for the patient are far greater than any worldly offer; there's simply no comparison. The hadith states, "The space of the whip of one of you in Paradise is better than the world and everything in it" (Ahmad: 15563).

It becomes clear that all complexities related to this topic will dissolve for those who correctly understand this truth: Is this life meant for happiness, or is there another realm for reward, compensation, and the joy of the believers? This world is a passage, and everyone in it, whether living in luxury or facing trials, will die. Then, a new life will begin, where the patient believers are rewarded, and those who turned away and were discontent are

judged accordingly. What justice is greater than this? And what favor is above this for the patient believers!

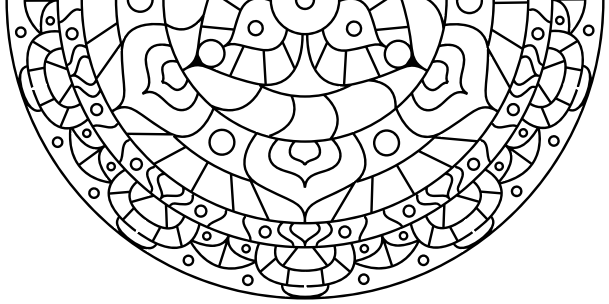
In summary, our belief as Muslims regarding the occurrence of evil in this world is based on two pillars:

- The first is the perfection of Allah in His knowledge, wisdom, mercy, might, justice, and dominion.
- The second is the imperfection of the servant in intellect, knowledge, capability, and perception.

Anyone who believes in the absolute perfection of Allah and recognizes their own imperfections will find that all problems related to this topic will dissolve, by the will of Allah. Praise be to Allah, to whom belongs everything in the heavens and the earth, and to Him will be praise in the Hereafter. He is the Wise, the Informed.

*For further benefit*

I recommend reading an enlightening faith-based and scientific section by Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, in his magnificent book "Miftah Dar al-Sa'adah" (2/812 – 847), published by Dar Alam al-Fawa'id.



# The tenth chapter: Allah has Perfect Wisdom

Wisdom: Placing something in its appropriate place to achieve commendable objectives from it.

Wisdom is one of Allah's attributes, established in a manner befitting Him, and does not resemble the wisdom of the created beings.

Among His names is "The Wise," mentioned in the Quran in about ninety places, primarily signifying Him as the possessor of wisdom.

The evidence affirming Allah's wisdom is abundant. Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, in his work "Shifa al-Alil" listed twenty-two types of evidence, under each of which falls a host of scriptural proofs. He even stated that anyone who contemplates the instances of Allah's wisdom in creation and command would find them, despite the limitations of human perception, exceeding ten thousand instances, all testifying to His wisdom in everything He decrees, rules, and creates.

He is, indeed, the Wisest of judges and the Most Knowledgeable, as He is the Most Merciful. He possesses dazzling wisdom and

overwhelming might. His wisdom fills existence and astonishes minds, becoming clearer to insights than sunlight to the eyes.

His creation and command bear witness to His profound wisdom, overflowing grace, irrefutable argument, and His being free from injustice, frivolity, and vain actions. {Indeed, my Lord is on a straight path} *[Hud: 56]*.

In everything He does, commands, or decrees, there are sought-after goals and commendable outcomes for which He is praised. For these reasons, He revealed His scriptures, sent His messengers, legislated His laws, created Paradise and Hell, and established reward and punishment.

Those granted the understanding of the Quran from its beginning to its end see it guiding minds to the realization that all of it emanates from His majesty and wisdom. Therefore, in many verses related to legislation, creation, and recompense, He pairs these two names (The Almighty and The Wise) to indicate to His servants that the source of all this is profound wisdom and overpowering might.

Anyone with accurate insight and sound reasoning acknowledges this in what they see and know, using what is apparent to infer the unseen; for all is the work of the All-Wise, the All-Knowing.

Contemplating even a single finger, with its skin, flesh, blood, nail, nerves, joints, fingerprints, and many other marvelous components, all perfectly aligned in this small entity, how much more so in this vast universe, both high and low!

A sincere contemplation of His creations reveals them founded upon utmost wisdom, covered in wisdom, with wisdom's lines read across them, calling out: This is the work of the Almighty,

the Wise, the decree of the Creator, Who perfected everything, without disparity in His creation.

And I seek forgiveness from Allah for delving into this grand topic, which I, nor all the people of Earth combined, can fully do justice to; for what the describers describe of His wisdom and what their knowledge ends with is like a person dipping their finger into the sea and then withdrawing it. What sticks to the finger is described as the sea, yet how distant is that from the sea itself! Thus, the matter is far grander and more significant than for human intellects to encompass even the slightest portion of it.

## Wisdom May Be Apparent or Hidden

The establishment of wisdom does not necessitate its manifestation in every situation or to everyone; for the wisdom of Allah the Almighty is greater than to be fully comprehended by His creation.

This means: Allah did not create anything, nor did He legislate any ruling, except that there is in it a purposed and beloved wisdom to Him, but wisdom is divided into apparent and hidden; it may be revealed or remain concealed, known to those who know it and unknown to those who are unaware, and it may be unknown to all creation.

He, the Exalted, knows what we do not {He said, "Indeed, I know what you do not know"} *[Al-Baqarah: 30]*. No one from the creation can fully grasp all the subtleties of His wisdom, and whoever does not accept this equates the creation with the Creator in understanding the benefits and all nuances of wisdom, how can the Lord of Lords be equal to the creature made of dust! And how can the ignorant wrongdoer be equated with the Knower of the unseen!

The enlightened ones have understood this and have accepted what they have come to know and what their intellects have reached, and they refer the knowledge of what is beyond their comprehension to Him who is All-Knowing. They are certain that in everything He creates, commands, rewards, and punishes, there are profound wisdoms beyond their understanding, acknowledging that He, the Exalted, is the Self-Sufficient, the Praiseworthy, the All-Knowing, the Wise, and that He is not questioned about what He does due to the perfection of His wisdom and knowledge, whereas the servants are questioned, for they are not so.

## Seeking wisdom in everything... Is it a wise approach?

Undoubtedly, it is not a wise approach; it is a grave mistake for a person to attempt to grasp the wisdom of Allah, the Almighty, in everything. This is among the broadest valleys of misguidance, and many who have ventured into it were not guided but went astray, and some may even fall into disbelief, Allah forbid.

Ibn Taymiyyah rightly said:

*The root of misguidance in every faction's creed,*

*Is probing divine acts, questioning His deed.*

*For lacking understanding of His wise command,*

*They fell into a form of ignorance, unplanned.*

Whoever follows this path seeks something beyond their capability, and if someone were told to count every grain of sand, fish in the sea, and all the stars in the sky; it would be an impossible demand to fulfill because their capability is far less; the incapacity here is due to the weakness of the one being asked, not because the sand, fish, or stars do not exist.

Therefore, the wisdom of Allah is certainly established beyond doubt, but intellects are too weak to encompass it entirely.

Moreover, I say: A person cannot fully comprehend the wisdom behind every action of a being like themselves. The general rule and usual practice are that when someone distinguishes something a little from its kinds and peers, they must come with what others do not know. Consider, in this context, what occurred between Moses and Al-Khidr, peace be upon them; how Moses, being more knowledgeable and of higher status, was unaware of the wisdom in some of Al-Khidr's actions which Allah narrated to us in Surah Al-Kahf, and in the authentic hadiths (Bukhari:122, Muslim: 2380) that Al-Khidr said to Moses, peace be upon them, "O Moses, I have knowledge from Allah which He has taught me and you do not know, and you have knowledge which Allah has taught you and I do not know." The difference in knowledge is a reason for the obscurity of wisdom.

So, if this is the case between a creature and another creature, indeed a noble creature with a less noble one; how about between an ignorant creature and an All-Knowing, Wise Creator, glorified be He.

And well said by the one who stated:

***The cause of disagreement is nothing but the difference in knowledge, partially or entirely.***

***Thus, it necessarily leads to Allah being distinct from humanity in these aspects.***

***If we had not been ignorant of its secrets, we would have reached the same goals as Him in it.***

Reflect upon this with the beasts too, for they understand in a manner suited to them, but their understanding does not reach

the wisdom of the wise, the compositions of the ingenious, nor the knowledge of the astute; likewise, the wise do not comprehend all the wisdom of Allah, to whom belongs the highest example.

And I say, as a way to approximate the intent: If a servant knew half of what Allah, exalted and honored be He, knows, it might be just that Allah's wisdom in what we are ignorant of lies in the other half; how so when Allah says: {And you were not given of knowledge except a little}? *[Al-Isra: 85]* And in Bukhari: 4725, Muslim: 2380, concerning the story of Moses and Khidr, peace be upon them both, the Prophet ﷺ said: "An ibis alighted on the edge of the ship and pecked at the sea, pecking once. Khidr said to him: 'My knowledge and your knowledge, in comparison to Allah's knowledge, is nothing more than what this ibis has taken from the sea'".

And how beautifully some have said: The proportion of our knowledge to Allah's knowledge is like nothingness to infinity.

Thus, let the Muslim be alert to this issue; it is of utmost importance and should be well comprehended; for one might slip into harboring ill thoughts about his Lord, exalted be He, or might err with a word that contests His Lordship, leading him to dire consequences.

And one may be influenced by the misconceptions of the misguided in this era, especially by the advocates of atheism and irreligion; for they often infiltrate their misguided call through discussions on wisdom and reasoning or its derivatives, particularly what they claim to be the problem of evil discussed in the previous chapter.

Therefore, cut off any hope of comprehending the wisdom in all the decrees of Allah, exalted be He, whether of destiny or legislation, and be certain that Allah, exalted be He, has profound wisdom.

If you trust in the intellect of a human being, in their love for you, and in the purity of their heart, then you will submit to their actions even if you do not understand the reason behind every single one of their actions.

That is, if you trust in the intellect of your father, for example, and in his love and sound judgment, then if you see some strange actions from him, you will ask, "Why did my father do this?" But you will return to the principle established within you that he is a sensible man; there must be a valid reason for his action, and if he takes a stance against me, I am convinced that he loves me and does not wish me harm, even if I am ignorant of the reason behind his stance.

In summary: Allah has profound wisdom. This is a definitive fact, and whether it appears or not is not essential; it may appear or it may not.

This is an important principle worth remembering: "Two prohibitions in two realms: 'how' in the realm of the unseen, and 'why' in the realm of predestination."

"Why," "For what reason" - such inquiry, if it revolves around the actions of Allah and His divine decrees, does not guarantee safety from falling into peril... "Why does Allah do this?"... "Why did Allah give to one and not to another?"... "Why did Allah guide one person and misguide another?"... Beware of such questions that could lead to regrettable consequences.

Trust and believe with certainty and faith that your Lord has profound wisdom, and having wisdom in concealing wisdom is wisdom itself!

## Objecting to the Divine or Legislative Decree Due to Not Knowing the Wisdom

In this matter, there are two closely related errors committed by some people:

The first is delving into the wisdom behind every minor and major thing, as previously discussed.

The second is conditioning obedience on knowing the wisdom; thus, someone might say, "I will obey His command if the wisdom behind it becomes apparent to me!"

Perhaps they won't dare to be so boldly impudent; however, they approach obeying the command reluctantly and skeptically; because they claim not to know the wisdom behind the command, which is a grave danger!

The foundation of servitude and faith is based on submission, which includes refraining from excessively probing into the details of wisdom in commands, prohibitions, and destinies.

If the Sharia mentions a wisdom and it is comprehended by reason, this enhances insight. And if it does not become apparent, it should not weaken the compliance of the reverent servant to his Lord, nor should it undermine his adherence.

For instance, if you know the wisdom behind the prohibition of drinking alcohol, but do not know the wisdom behind Maghrib prayer being three units, the obligation is to submit to both rulings and respond to your Lord in both, without differentiation.

The scholars have said: No one's religion is safe unless they submit to Allah, Exalted be He, and His Messenger ﷺ defer the knowledge of what is confusing to its Knower, and the firm footing of Islam is only on the back of submission and surrender;

whoever seeks the knowledge forbidden to him and is not content with submission will be barred by his pursuit from pure monotheism, clear knowledge, and correct faith; swaying between disbelief and belief.

Thus, Allah, Exalted be He, has not narrated about any nation that believed its prophet and had faith in what he brought from doubting or questioning the details of the wisdom behind what he commanded, prohibited, or conveyed from their Lord. Rather, they complied, submitted, and acquiesced, knowing what wisdom they could and not stalling in their obedience, faith, and surrender for what was hidden from them, nor did they make seeking it their concern. Their prophet was more significant in their hearts than asking him about that. They did not say, "Why has our Lord commanded?" but rather, "What has our Lord commanded?" Their concern was to discover His orders and desires to comply with them.

As for the one who objects to the wisdom of his Lord: how weak is his faith, and how deficient is his intellect!

Tell me, what do you think of a man who is the most skilled in a craft, having perfected its tools and means in the best possible way, and then comes a completely unrelated ignorant man, starts objecting to parts of that craft, its tools, and measures, saying, "Shouldn't this be larger, and that smaller?" or "Should have been placed in such and such position?"(8)

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(8) To illustrate the intended point, let's consider this example: Imagine a person ignorant of aviation science entering the cockpit of an airplane and then scanning its buttons, switches, and instruments before engaging in the following dialogue with the pilot: -

- Ignorant person: This button, that switch, and that gauge seem pointless to me, and I see no use for them!

Imagine a completely uneducated layman, who has never learned

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- Pilot: Are you specialized in aviation sciences?

- Ignorant person: No...

- Pilot: Then your objection is invalid; because you are ignorant, and an ignorant person cannot object!

- Ignorant person: My opinion is based on an argument, which is: I don't understand the wisdom behind their existence, nor the purpose of placing them here!

- Pilot: That's a flawed argument; just because you don't know the wisdom behind them doesn't mean it doesn't exist, and your ignorance doesn't entitle you to judge!

- Ignorant person: If there is wisdom to them, I should know it; so, explain to me the function of these keys and the reason for their placement here, and the purpose of using them!

- Pilot: Explaining the purpose of what you're objecting to is beyond your level, and comprehending it requires premises and experience, for which you are not qualified. I might - out of courtesy - give you a general idea about them that suits your limited understanding; but whether I do or don't, you must adhere to three things: not to object to something you are not fully informed about, to trust me and my actions since I am knowledgeable about these devices and qualified to fly the plane, and I want nothing but good for you and the passengers, and to fulfill what is required of you as a passenger; which is not to pry into the wisdom behind something that's not your concern, but rather to obey my instructions only; so you can safely arrive, by the will of Allah.

Which of the two men has a stronger argument and sounder reasoning?

The moral of the story I presented is that if it's unreasonable for a creature ignorant of a subject to object to another creature more knowledgeable in it; how much more inappropriate is it for a creature, ignorant and unjust, to object to its Creator, the Most Knowledgeable of all and the Wisest of judges?

a thing, attempting to debate grammar with Sibawayh, metrics with Al-Khalil, algebra with Al-Khwarizmi, the laws of motion with Newton, his views on nuclear physics with Rutherford, or the space vehicle research presented by NASA!

Wouldn't the wise mock such a person, considering him among the foolish?

It's worth noting that the objector, if he strives and learns, could potentially contribute to that expert's field, or even surpass him in it!

If the objection of an ignorant person to an expert is rejected by every sensible person; what then about objecting to the One whose wisdom is unmatched and whose knowledge is unparalleled? Indeed, the knowledge of all creation, from the first to the last, compared to His knowledge, is like a drop against the oceans of the world!

Shouldn't one feel ashamed to see the folly of an inferior creature objecting to a superior one, and then to object to the wisdom of the Most Knowledgeable of all and the Wisest of judges, exalted be He!

What's astonishing here is that the objector uses the very intellect bestowed upon him by the One he is objecting to! SubhanAllah; if there is no reverence, shouldn't there at least be some shame!

And truly, as He, the Most High, described man: {Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant} *[Al-Ahzab: 72]*.

## Comprehensive Principles for the Correct Approach to the Concept of Divine Wisdom

It would be beneficial to outline comprehensive principles that clarify the essence of the correct approach to dealing with the subject of Allah's wisdom in His creation and command.

Here are fifteen principles, some of which have been mentioned before:

### *1) That the Divine Wisdom is Established Generally Negates the Need for Delve Into its Specifics, and a General Answer Suffices the Believer Over a Detailed One.*

The angels, peace be upon them, did not know the specific wisdom behind Allah's decision to make Adam, peace be upon him, a vicegerent on Earth. They asked their Lord about it, saying: {Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?} *[Al-Baqarah: 30]*. Allah did not specify the wisdom in detail but provided them with a general answer, saying: {Indeed, I know what you do not know} *[Al-Baqarah: 30]*.

If this answer sufficed the angels, then it should suffice the believers as well.

Therefore, it is imperative to believe that all actions and decrees of Allah that seem perplexing to human intellect are not devoid of wisdom, benefits, and commendable outcomes. This is indicated by His saying to the angels: {Indeed, I know what you do not know}. Had wisdom not been intended in His actions, the angels would not have asked about it, and had the general answer not been sufficient for the believers, they would not have been responded to with the breadth of knowledge.

Thus, hold fast to the general answer: {And Allah knows, while you do not know} *[Al-Baqarah: 216]*.

### *2) The Limitation of Knowledge Does Not Stand as an Objection*

If humans do not encompass all aspects of Allah's wisdom in some of His actions, or any of it in others, He, exalted be He, still has the definitive argument, the reaching wisdom, and the absolute perfection.

The inadequacy of the unjust, ignorant servant to know the specific details of wisdom does not stand as an objection to the conclusive evidence that confirms that the Wisest of all Wise has wisdom, and that he is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

To those whose hearts are saturated with the essence of faith, this general knowledge suffices. Anyone who objects to Allah in His judgment and decree is not basing their objection on knowledge but rather declaring their ignorance and the limitation of their intellect.

### *3) Allah Almighty Is Just and Does Not Oppress*

There are numerous scriptural and rational proofs of this. Here's a logical proof: His Majesty, the Lord, fears no one and does not need be wary of anyone. Had He wished, He could have created creation directly into Hellfire, without the need for empowerment, obligation, scriptures, messengers, resurrection, records, and scales! When He chose this over that, we knew His intention was to be described as just and not to be accused of oppression. This knowledge is essential for anyone of sound mind. So, be certain that your Lord is just and does not oppress and find peace in that.

### *4) Question Your Doubts*

The statement by some whose intellect fails to grasp the wisdom in some of Allah's actions, claiming there is no wisdom in them

and they are pure evil, is like the mother who sees cupping as purely harmful and refrains from using it to benefit her child, or the fool who sees capital punishment as pure evil because he looks only at the individual case of the executed, ignoring the broader good it brings to society. They fail to realize that achieving general good through specific harm is purely beneficial and should not be neglected by the wise; so, doubt your fleeting thoughts.

### *5) Distinguish Between What the Intellect Cannot Grasp and What the Intellect Knows to Be Impossible*

I.e., between what the intellect does not know for certain and what the intellect knows does not exist. Between the perplexities of the intellect and what the intellect deems to be impossible. For indeed, the messengers, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon them, may inform us about the perplexities of the intellect, which are beyond our understanding, and they do not inform us about the intellect deem to be impossible. Such things do not occur in the Sharia at all.

### *6) Contemplate in Search of Guidance, Not to Criticize*

No one knows the wisdom in the legislation unless Allah opens it to them and they sincerely reflect upon it with an unbiased mind, not with criticism. So, let us reflect on the signs of our Lord with the intention of seeking guidance, not for the sake of criticism; for those who look at the legislation with criticism will not have the doors of knowledge opened for them, as {Those who do not believe in the signs of Allah - Allah will not guide them} *[Al-Nahl: 104]*. However, for the one who looks to it is seeking righteousness, Allah will open to them and reveal secrets hidden from many people; so, believe, and you will be guided.

### *7) Remember the Lord's Perfection and the Servant's Deficiency*

Let a person remember what they know of themselves; of their ignorance, lack of knowledge, indecision in matters, confusion in simple things, repeatedly changing their mind, and finding something after having despaired of it; for a person's knowledge of their own state is necessary and it is an argument against them, as the Almighty said, {But man has insight into his own soul} *[Al-Qiyamah: 14]*, and He described him as unjust and ignorant.

He must also remember the great variance among creation in dullness and intelligence, in understanding nuances and foreseeing consequences; so, how vast must be the variance between the creation and their All-Knowing, Almighty Creator, exalted be He!

### *8) Use What You Know to Infer What Is Unknown to You*

It is sufficient for mature minds to deduce from what they have understood of His wisdom, may He be exalted, to what is beyond their grasp, and to know that there is wisdom in everything He has created and legislated. And a wise leader among humans, if his wisdom and his pursuit of welfare for those under his care are established, this knowledge spares him the need to track his intentions in every detail of his actions; what then of the Lord of the Worlds, the Wisest of judges, the Most Knowledgeable of all!

Therefore, the general establishment of divine wisdom suffices over delving into its details.

### *9) Understanding the Wisdom in Detail Is Not Within Human Capabilities*

Therefore, if someone were to ask: Why hasn't Allah Almighty informed every one of His servants about everything He does and

made them understand His governance in all that He wills, as well as His wisdom in the smallest and greatest of what He has originated and created?! It is said: Would a creature do this with another creature; a father with his son, a friend with a friend?! How then about the Lord with His servants?! Moreover, is it within the creature's capabilities to bear that?! Absolutely not, this is from His glory, may He be exalted, and from His mercy towards His servants.

In summary: Human capabilities are not prepared to know the details of Allah's wisdom in His creation and command, and thus, explaining the details of wisdom is futile and contrary to wisdom.

### *10) The Divine Wisdom May Be Apparent or Hidden, So Its Existence Does Not Necessitate Its Appearance in Every Situation, to Everyone*

Therefore, it suffices for the believers to know the general overview, and they should not delve into the details of what is beyond them.

### *11- The World Is a Place of Trial, and Part of This Trial Is Sometimes the Hiddenness of Wisdom*

Among the trials and tests that distinguish a believer from others is the hiddenness of wisdom in some of Allah's legislative and destiny-related decrees. Do not find this hiddenness strange!

### *12- In Our Minds Lies the Power to Submit, Not the Power to Object*

It is feasible for human minds to submit to their Lord's wisdom and to comply with His decree, and it is not in their power to object to His decrees; for this would imply that the creature has knowledge like that of the Creator, and how could this be! Thus, it is the duty of the servant to obey his Lord, not to preempt His

wisdom or to judge His decree. And what a loss for a servant who objects to the decrees of his Lord and His predestinations because of the hiddenness of wisdom!

## 13) Scrutinizing Wisdom in Every Minor and Major Detail Leads to Peril, and Tying Faith to the Knowledge of Wisdom Is a Great Danger

For anyone who burdens himself with something beyond his capacity harms himself; it becomes like staring directly at the sun; one damages his eyes and gains nothing! What is beyond the capacity of the mind leads it astray, and the hearts become troubled at its peripheries! And in the stories of those who refused and strived for that distant goal, there is a lesson!

### *14) Knowing the Detailed Wisdom Is a Blessing, and Not Knowing It Is Also a Blessing!*

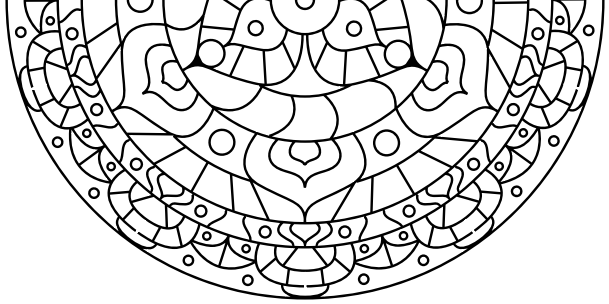
It was mentioned earlier that every divine decree or fate has an intended wisdom, known by those who know it and unknown by those who do not. If it becomes apparent to a servant: they praise Allah and their certainty in the wisdom of their Lord, the greatness of their religion, and its value increases. And if it does not become apparent: their faith increases by their submission to their Lord and acceptance of what their mind cannot comprehend, because it comes from Allah. Hence, the inability to grasp understanding is, in itself, an understanding! For submitting to the unknown wisdom of something becomes a great blessing; how many doors of faith, treasures of certainty, and rain of guidance it opens for a servant, and those who have experienced it know!

### *15) Whoever Cannot Understand the Wisdom of a Creature Like Themselves Is Even More Incapable of Understanding the Wisdom of Their Lord*

Let the servant be humble and let go of stubbornness!

*For further benefit*

I recommend reading a beneficial chapter, which is the twenty-second chapter from "Shifa al-Alil" by Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him (2/ 115-156) published by Dar Alam al-Fawaid, on the wisdom of the Lord Almighty, especially in establishing evidence on Allah's wisdom.



# Chapter Eleven: Guidance and Misguidance

The issue of guidance and misguidance is among the matters of predestination, and it is one of the important, intricate, and profound issues that may pose difficulties for some people. Therefore, it is essential to be aware of its correct foundational understanding; otherwise, a significant error may occur.

Before delving into this topic, it is necessary to establish some preliminary principles that, with Allah's success, will help control it. These principles are of utmost importance, and it is essential to understand and keep them in mind well:

### First Rule: Part of Predestination is Known, and Part of It Is Concealed

It is upon the servant to stop at the limit of what is known - which is what is provided in the Sharia evidence - and not to go beyond it to the concealed. Belief in predestination is mandatory, as is holding firmly to the principle of submission to Allah. One must be cautious of delving into what cannot be known of the secrets of destiny.

I repeat: Predestination is a secret among the secrets, veiled behind curtains, so it is not appropriate for a person to dig into it, because they will not be able to reach anything; instead, they will go astray. This is why the predecessors used to say, "Predestination is the secret of Allah, so we do not uncover it." This means that minds are incapable of comprehending the essence of the intended purpose of His actions, exalted is He, just as they are incapable of grasping the essence of His true nature, exalted is He.

Scholars have said: The basis of predestination is the secret of Allah Almighty in His creation, unknown even by the angels and the prophets, and delving and contemplating into it is a means to abandonment, a ladder to deprivation, and a degree of tyranny; so beware, all beware of that; in thought, consideration, and whispering; for Allah Almighty has folded the knowledge of destiny away from His creatures and forbidden them from its pursuit.

Al-Ajurri reported in "Al-Shariah" (2/936) from Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with them, that he said about predestination: "It is something that Allah Almighty wished not to disclose to you, so do not seek from Allah what He refuses you."

And this concealed destiny is what His ﷺ prohibition against delving into predestination refers to when He said, "And when predestination is mentioned, hold back." Reported by Al-Tabarani (1427).

In summary: This is a point that must be heeded: part of predestination, its knowledge is stored away from us.

**Second Principle: Allah Is Just and Does Not Commit Injustice**

And it is obligatory for you to believe that because justice is one of his noble attributes. The Prophet ﷺ said, "So who will be just

if Allah and His Messenger are not just?!" Agreed upon (Bukhari: 3150, Muslim: 1062).

And Allah is exalted above any form of injustice; indeed, He has forbidden it upon Himself, so this is a truth that you must be certain of.

For Allah - as mentioned before - fears no one and is cautious of none. Had He willed, He could have created creation in Hell from the outset, without the need for endowing them with intellect or tasking them with Sharia, and without sending down books, sending messengers, resurrection, reckoning, scriptures, and scales... But when He chose this over that: we certainly realized that He is described with justice, exalted above any form of injustice, {So Allah was not to do them injustice, but they were doing injustice to themselves} *[Al-Tawbah: 70]*.

Therefore, whenever Satan whispers in your soul, return to this firm principle: "Allah is just and does not commit injustice." This truth must be as firmly established as the mountains!

And if something in the matter of destiny seems confusing to you, it should not disturb your belief in Allah's justice and His being free from any form of injustice.

## Third Principle: Allah Has Profound Wisdom

If He guides, it is for a wisdom, and if He misleads, it is for a wisdom, and the existence of wisdom does not necessitate knowing it. It suffices that we infer about what we do not know from what we know, as mentioned in the previous chapter.

Allah has affirmed wisdom for Himself in many texts and has revealed to us some of its details. This amount is sufficient for us

to believe in the existence of wisdom for Him, exalted is He, and to infer in matters we do not know of it from what we do know.

Therefore: Allah possesses profound wisdom, so His guidance and misguidance are due to the wisdom for which He is praised.

## Fourth Principle: The Intellects are Weak!

Thus, they are too limited to fully comprehend this great matter (predestination). Allah created the servant weak: {And man was created weak} *[Al-Nisa: 28]*.

This is something every rational being acknowledges. Just as Allah gave you limited vision, not encompassing vision, and just as He gave you limited hearing, not encompassing hearing, and just as He gave you limited power, not absolute power; so too did He make your intellect limited, not expansive.

The matter is as reported from Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both - as in Al-Ibanah by Ibn Battah (1/422): "Just as Allah has set a limited range for the sight of the eyes beyond which there is a hidden veil; so too has He set a limit for the sight of the hearts that it cannot surpass, and boundaries it cannot exceed."

Therefore, the knowledge that is hidden from us in the matter of predestination is something beyond the capacity of the intellect, and the intellect is incapable of comprehending it. If it delves into it, it becomes perplexed, and thus the predecessors said: "The likeness of predestination and one delving into it is like the sun and the one looking at it, the more he looks at it, the more perplexed he becomes."

Your vision is too weak to stare at the sun, and if it does stare, it harms itself; so too with predestination; if you delve deeply into

it and exceed what is mentioned in the evidence of Sharia, it will return to you with harm and affliction!

You realize from your own self your incapacity to encompass many things that occur among people, indeed you may be incapable of understanding the statements of humans like you - if they speak in specialties you are not proficient in; so how can a person expect to encompass with their intellect the knowledge of the All-Knowing, the Wise, and the wisdom of the Great, the Expansive, exalted is He.

Therefore, know your place and do not exceed it, not because predestination contains injustice, or anything beyond the bounds of wisdom; far from it, but because your intellect is too weak to fully grasp the details of every decree of Allah.

## Fifth Principle: Allah Has the Conclusive Argument, and the Servants Have No Argument Against Allah

Keep this in mind and be certain of it, and refer back to Him the ambiguities; for He said: {Say, "So for Allah is the conclusive argument"} *[Al-An'am: 149]*, meaning the argument that reaches the depths of the heart and mixes with the intellect, and whoever is fair will find that they cannot reject accepting this argument.

I repeat: Allah has the conclusive argument, and the servants have no argument against Allah; for Allah guided the servants to the path of truth, showed and clarified: {Indeed, We have guided him to the way, be he grateful or be he ungrateful} *[Al-Insan: 3]*. And he enabled guidance to the servants; He gave them intellects, hearing, and sight, sent messengers, revealed books, diversified signs, made unambiguous evidence and signs.

Thus, this truth is evident: the argument is for Allah against His servants, not for them against Him.

### Sixth Principle: Whoever Withholds His Bounty Is Not Unjust

Guidance is a favor from Allah and whoever withholds His bounty is not unjust. However, whoever withholds what is obligatory upon him is unjust, and Allah does not obligate the servants to owe Him anything, He is independent of that, and the servants are too insignificant to impose anything upon Allah.

## Seventh Principle: Allah Is Not to Be Questioned About What He Does

Allah says: {He is not questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned} *[Al-Anbiya: 23]*. Therefore, no one has the right to scrutinize His judgment or oppose Him when He wills something. Rather, He is capable of doing what He wishes, indeed, He is over all things competent, and due to the perfection of His wisdom, there is no disputing His judgments; because He does nothing in vain, and He does not create anything aimlessly.

Only those who deviate from correctness and do not act with benefit or utility are questioned about their actions.

Some people might think that the reason He is not questioned about what He does is because the matter returns to a will not coupled with wisdom, but this is not the case; Allah is not questioned about what He does due to His perfection. If there was any doubt in His knowledge or in His wisdom, perhaps the question would be directed: Why, my Lord, did You do such? But Allah is exalted above that; for Him is complete dignity, extensive knowledge, and profound wisdom; so how could He - with this - be questioned about what He does?!

When you are certain of this: you submit to your Lord, and you do not ask, and you do not overburden yourself.

### Eighth and Final Principle: Be Mindful of the Etiquette with Allah

When you enter into this subject, remember that you are speaking about a matter of the Lord and the servant, and about the matter of the Great Master, His Majesty, the Lord, to whom everything belongs, and a created servant, nurtured and managed, needy of his Lord in everything; beware lest the recklessness of your soul leads you to overstep your bounds, thus disrespecting your Lord, and how often this happens.

Disrespect towards Allah may lead a servant to dire consequences, so be alert!

These are preparatory principles and firm fundamentals; cling to them, and refer to them your problems, using predestination instead of destiny.

## The Correct Understanding of the Topic of Guidance and Misguidance

The true belief in this matter is that guidance and misguidance are in the hands of Allah; He guides whom He wills as a grace and favor from Him, and He misleads whom He wills as a wisdom and justice from Him.

Here, there are two things: the first is guidance, and the second is misguidance. Each of them has its regulations in accordance with Ahl al-Sunnah.

## Firstly: The Matter of Guidance (The Guidance of Success)

And its regulations are four:

**The First Principle**: Guidance is from Allah; He is the One who willed it, exalted be He. Had not Allah guided His servants, they would not have been guided, as He says: {And they say, "Praise be to Allah, who has guided us to this; and we would never have been guided if Allah had not guided us"} *[Al-A'raf: 43]*. And in the two Sahihs (Bukhari: 4104 and Muslim: 1802), the Prophet ﷺ on the day of the Battle of the Trench used to say: "By Allah, had not Allah guided us, we would not have been guided, nor would we have given charity, nor prayed."

So, there is no guidance for the servant except from Him and had He not willed it for him, it would not have been at all. Knowing this should drive a person to sincerely ask his Lord for guidance and to be persistent in seeking it from Him.

**The Second Principle**: Guidance is purely a favor from Allah. The servant has no right over Him by which he deserved to be guided, and the situation is not one of exchange; that the servant offers something, so it becomes obligatory on Allah to guide him in return; it is not like that; rather, guidance is purely a favor from Allah, and the servants deserve nothing from Him, exalted be He. He says: {And the favor is in Allah's hand; He gives it to whom He wills} *[Al-Hadid: 29]*. And He says: {He selects for His mercy whom He wills. And Allah is the possessor of great bounty} *[Al-Baqarah: 105]*. And in the divine (qudsi) hadith reported in Sahih Muslim (2577), He says: "O My servants, all of you are astray except for those I have guided."

Therefore: Guidance is purely a favor from Allah, and the servants cannot oblige their Lord, nor do they deserve anything from Him, except what He has obligated upon Himself.

**The Third Principle**: The favor of guidance is based on the knowledge and wisdom of Allah. Meaning that Allah only guides based on knowledge; He knows best where to place His favor. Thus, He said concerning the disbelievers who said about the companions: {Are these the ones whom Allah has favored among us?} *[Al-An'am: 53]* Allah said: {Is not Allah most knowing of those who are grateful?} *[Al-An'am: 53]*.

Therefore: Allah guides based on knowledge and wisdom, knowing who is fit for guidance. His wisdom necessitated that He places the favor where it befits, and this is wisdom: to place everything in its appropriate place. Just as the place prepared for urine and filth is not suitable for placing fragrances like musk, agarwood, and rose oil, and a valuable necklace is not wisely placed around the neck of a pig!

Therefore, whoever Allah guides, it is because He, exalted be He, knows that they are worthy of guidance, and that guidance befits them, so wisdom necessitated placing it in them.

And these three regulations are encompassed in His saying: {But Allah has endeared to you the faith and has made it beautiful in your hearts and has made hateful to you disbelief, defiance, and disobedience. Those are the rightly guided as a favor from Allah and a blessing. And Allah is Knowing, Wise} *[Al-Hujurat: 7 - 8]*.

**The Fourth Principle**: Allah's grace in providing guidance has two aspects:

**The first aspect is the initial guidance**; Allah begins by guiding whom He wills. He says in the divine (qudsi) hadith: "O

My servants, all of you are astray except for those I have guided" (Muslim: 2577), and He says: {And is one who was dead and We gave him life and made for him light by which to walk among the people} *[Al-An'am: 122]*.

Human beings were created ignorant and unjust; if left to themselves and their souls, without Allah's support and without opening their hearts - indeed, they would go astray.

Thus, there is a subtlety that Allah began with whom He willed and instilled it in the heart of whom He loved. When the heart was heedless, it remembers, and when it was deviant, it is guided. Were it not for Allah's grace upon him, he would surely be astray.

**The second aspect is subsequent guidance**: meaning, for those whom Allah has favored by casting guidance into their hearts; if they do good, He guides them to another good deed, and if they perform that, He guides them to a third, and so on.

Therefore, guidance is not only what was at the beginning, but every good deed a Muslim does is by a special guidance from Allah; even if it were reciting a verse, saying "SubhanAllah," or praying two Rak'ahs; had Allah not guided the servant to it, they would not have performed it.

This directs the servant to appreciate the immense favor and generosity of their Lord; for He rewards a good deed with another, and rewards guidance with subsequent guidance, He says: {And those who are guided, He increases them in guidance and gives them their righteousness} *[Muhammad: 17]*. And He says: {So as for he who gives and fears Allah and believes in the best *[reward]*, We will ease him toward ease} *[Al-Layl: 5 - 7]*. There is much evidence in this regard.

Therefore, it is essential to notice this matter, as it is frequently overlooked, where many people, when reciting Allah's saying: {Guide us to the straight path} *[Al-Fatihah: 6]*, only remember the initial guidance and forget that there are other subsequent forms of guidance.

You need to be guided to the path, and you need to be guided on the path, and all of that is from Allah; He is the Preparer and the Supporter, exalted in His highness.

## Secondly: The Issue of Misguidance

This topic is important and delicate; delving into it should be done gently, and the previous eight introductions should first be recalled. Misguidance also has four regulations:

**The First Principle**: Allah has decreed misguidance and willed it. Had Allah willed that a servant should not go astray, they would not have gone astray. Servants are too weak to disobey Allah forcefully, and Allah is more powerful than that; glorified be the One who, if disobeyed, it is only by His will; for His majesty and wisdom.

Therefore, whatever occurs of the disliked disobedience is willed by Him, in creation but not in legislation; for a wisdom He knows. Evidence for this includes His saying: {Indeed, Allah leads astray whom He wills} *[Fatir: 8]*. And His statement: {Whomsoever Allah wills, He leaves astray; and whomsoever He wills, He places on the straight path} *[Al-An'am: 39]*.

Knowing this instills in the servants great fear of Him, exalted be He, and drives them to seek refuge with Him from misguidance, for the entire affair belongs to Him.

**The Second Principle**: Misguidance is pure justice from Allah. Misguidance is just; because it is a punishment, and imposing the

deserved punishment and placing it where it belongs is justice, and justice is praiseworthy, and its bearer is commendable.

The reason for this is that Allah has established the argument, removed the excuses, having enabled guidance; He gave intellects, hearing, and sight, and did not prevent the servant from reaching the truth. He sent messengers, revealed books, diversified the signs, and set forth parables; hence, the servant has no excuse: {Messengers as bearers of good news as well as of warning in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the messengers} *[Al-Nisa: 165]*. The Prophet ﷺ said: "No one loves to be excused more than Allah, which is why He sends the bearers of good news and the warners." Agreed upon (Bukhari: 7416, Muslim: 1499), and he ﷺ said: "No one loves to be excused more than Allah, for that reason, He sent down the scriptures and dispatched the messengers" reported by Muslim (2760).

If that is so, then if the servant turns away from the truth and refrains from responding to their Lord, wouldn't they be unjust and deserving of punishment? The answer is yes.

If Allah has enabled guidance, commanded His servants, sent messengers bearing good news and warnings, and provided signs that the intellects would submit to, then the servant, despite this, refuses to turn towards it; aren't they doing wrong and being unjust? The answer is yes.

Therefore, whoever is unjust deserves to be punished by Allah by being led astray. He says: {As for Thamud, We guided them} *[Fussilat: 17]*, meaning guidance of direction and indication, so what was their response? {But they preferred blindness over guidance} *[Fussilat: 17]*; thus, Allah led them astray, and they were worthy of this.

Thus, Allah does not punish anyone -by leading them astray- except after the message has reached them, He says, {And Allah

would not let a people stray after He has guided them until He makes clear to them what they should avoid} *[Al-Tawbah: 115]*. So, this misguidance is a punishment from Him to them when He clarified the truth to them, and they did not accept it, so He punished them by leading them astray from it; hence, He never led anyone astray except after this clarification.

When you understand this, many doubts are removed, and you know the wisdom of Allah in leading astray those of His servants whom He leads astray.

The Quran states this in several places, like His saying: {So when they deviated, Allah caused their hearts to deviate} *[Al-Saff: 5]*. And His statement: {But Allah has sealed them for their disbelief} *[Al-Nisa: 155]*, and His words: {And Allah has set them back for what they have earned} *[Al-Nisa: 88]*.

This contrasts with someone whose misguidance is due to the message not reaching them or their inability to access it, for which there is another ruling, and the threat in the Quran only addresses the former.

As for the latter: indeed, Allah does not punish anyone except after establishing the evidence against them, as He says: {And We were not to punish until We sent a messenger} *[Al-Isra: 15]*, and He says: {Messengers as bearers of good news and of warning, so that mankind will have no argument against Allah after the messengers} *[Al-Nisa: 165]*.

In summary: Misguidance is a punishment, and imposing punishment where it is due is justice, and Allah, exalted be He, is praised for this justice.

**The Third Principle**: The punishment by misguidance returns to the knowledge and wisdom of Allah.

For Allah knew that these astray individuals do not deserve guidance, it does not suit them, and they are not its people. He only bestows His favor where wisdom requires bestowing, and withholds His favor where wisdom necessitates its withholding.

To bring this matter closer with an example: Consider a person who has reached the extreme in criminality and is presented before a judge. The judge has the option to punish him or to release him. Knowing from the circumstances about this person that if he were released from the court's door with a pardon, the first person he sees, he might rob or even kill, spreading terror among the people; would it be wise to favor him with a pardon? Or would favoring him be foolishness far from wisdom, and wisdom requires punishing him? I believe the answer is clear.

Thus, the favor must be placed where it suits, or it would be foolishness, and Allah is exalted above folly.

It becomes clear that if Allah misguides whom He misguides; then this is with His knowledge, that these individuals are not suited for guidance, and it does not befit them. "Pigs" are not suited for having precious jewels placed around their necks, and guidance is more noble and valuable. Once you understand this, the issue is resolved.

To make understanding this matter easier for you, consider the state of the misguided disbelievers in the Hereafter: Allah informed us that when they see the Fire with their own eyes, they would ask to return to the worldly life to do virtuous deeds different from what they used to do. So, what did He who knows everything, exalted be He, say? {And if they were returned, they would return to what they were forbidden; and indeed, they are liars} *[Al-An'am: 28]*. What vile souls these are! When wickedness reaches such a degree, does it befit Allah to favor them! They witnessed the punishment, and

there is no longer the slightest doubt in the truth of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, yet still: if they were returned, they would revert to what they were forbidden from of disbelief and disobedience; therefore: it is all wisdom that these individuals are misguided.

**The Fourth Principle**: Allah's punishment by misguidance has two types: a punishment for abandoning what Allah has commanded, and a punishment for doing what Allah has forbidden.

The first type is due to their inaction. Explanation: When the evidence was established against them, and the message reached them, it was obligatory for them to comply and accept Allah's guidance, but they did not, so they deserved to be led astray by Allah, He says: {And We will turn their hearts and their eyes away, as they refused to believe in it the first time} *[Al-An'am: 110]*, and the first time meant when the evidence reached them, and they were obligated to accept but did not; thus, Allah led their hearts astray.

From this category is His saying: {Then they turned away, Allah turned their hearts away} *[Al-An'am: 127]*.

The second type is a punishment for action, which is their disbelief, disobedience, turning away from the truth, and denying Allah's command. Allah punishes them for this by increasing them in misguidance.

Therefore: Every sin is a punishment for a sin before it, and every deviation is a punishment for a deviation before it, He says: {But as for he who is stingy and self-sufficient, and denies the best, We will ease him toward difficulty} *[Al-Layl: 8 - 10]*, and He says: {And Allah has caused them to stumble for what they have earned} *[Al-Nisa: 88]* and He says: {In their hearts is a disease, so Allah has increased their disease} *[Al-Baqarah: 10]*. And there is much evidence in this regard.

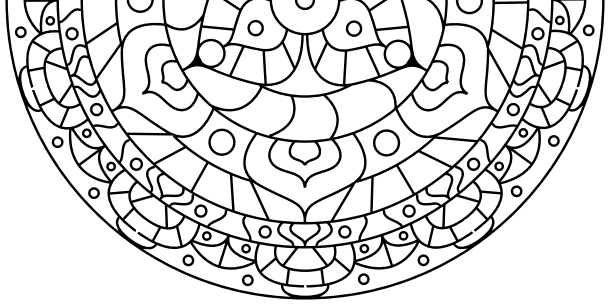
In summary: The sin that occurred is a punishment for a previous sin, and the previous sin is a punishment for a sin before it, and so on, until we reach the first sin, which is turning away from the truth when the evidence was established, and the warning was given.

After all that has been said, it is stated: Here ends the knowledge of the servants about predestination, and beyond this, its knowledge is hidden from us! Meaning, this is the extent of what the servants know about the topic of guidance and misguidance, and beyond this is only silence and delegating knowledge to the One who encompasses everything in knowledge.

There is a (red line), so to speak, that we are not to cross; beware of delving into this topic more than this extent; for Satan may whisper inquiries, doubts, questions, and objections, and this is something baseless and irrelevant. So, restrain yourself, for there is no way to know beyond what has been mentioned.

### *For further benefit*

I recommend reading the book "Shifa al-'Alil fi Masail al-Qada' wa al-Qadr wa al-Hikmah wa al-Ta'lil," for the entire book is great on the topic of predestination. For those who seek a summary, I recommend referring to (1/267-271) of it, published by Dar Alam al-Fawaid.



# Chapter Twelve: Using Predestination as an Excuse for Sins

The believer is the one who fears Allah by performing the commanded acts, avoiding the prohibited, and bearing patiently whatever is predestined, seeking Allah's aid in all of that, as He, the Exalted, says: {You alone we worship, and You are alone we ask for help} *[Al-Fatihah: 5]*.

And if he sins, he seeks forgiveness and repents; he does not use predestination as an excuse for his misdeeds, nor does he see any creature having an argument against the Lord of beings; rather, he believes in predestination, and does not argue with it in this context, as in the hadith of the master of seeking forgiveness: "I seek refuge in You from the evil I have done. I acknowledge Your favor upon me, and I acknowledge my sin, so forgive me, for none forgives sins except You". Reported by Bukhari (6306).

The truthful servant acknowledges Allah's favor upon him in his good deeds, knows that it was He who guided him and made ease for him, acknowledges his sins, and repents from them, with his condition and statement being: "I obeyed You by Your favor, and

the favor is Yours, and I disobeyed You with Your knowledge, and the argument is Yours, so I ask Your pardon and forgiveness."

And in the divine (qudsi) hadith: "O My servants, it is but your deeds that I account for you, and then recompense you for. So, whoever finds good, let him praise Allah, and whoever finds other than that, let him blame none but himself." Reported by Muslim (2577).

## When Is It Permissible to Use Predestination as an Argument, and When Is It Not?

Predestination is believed in and mentioned when a person has been struck with calamities and misfortunes, not as an excuse for sins and faults; it is incumbent upon the servant to repent from faults and be patient with misfortunes.

A servant is not to sin, and if he does sin, he must seek forgiveness and repent. As for predestined misfortunes, one must surrender to them; for it is part of complete satisfaction with Allah as Lord.

Clarification: The believer is reassured by predestination in misfortunes; when afflicted by a calamity among those he cannot dispute, he finds comfort in Allah's decree and turns to it; thus, his calamity becomes lighter, and he gains tranquility, serenity, and submission, knowing that Allah's decree is better for him. He says: "This was in according to Allah's decree, and He does whatever He wills," and remembers the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: "Just is Your decree" reported by Ahmad (3712), acknowledging that Allah's decree is better for him, finding peace in that, and hoping it to be a means for atoning for sins and elevating ranks. Allah says: {No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart} *[Al-Taghabun: 11]*. Alqama bin Qais, may Allah have mercy on him, one of the students of

the companions, said about this verse: "It is the man who, when afflicted by a calamity, knows it is from Allah, so he surrenders to it and is pleased." Meaning, whoever is pleased with that and submits to His divine decree, is guided by Allah in his heart, finds tranquility and is not disturbed, and is granted stability, patience, and success, achieving immediate reward, in addition to what Allah reserves for him of reward on the Day of Resurrection.

In summary: Mentioning predestination is only justified in the face of misfortunes, not faults; the fortunate one seeks forgiveness for faults and is patient with misfortunes, as Allah, the Exalted, says: {So be patient. Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth. And ask forgiveness for your sin} *[Ghafir: 55]*.

The wretched one despairs at misfortunes and argues predestination for his faults.

## The Ruling on Using Predestination as an Excuse for Sins

It is a sign of abandonment, lack of success, and poor manners towards Allah for a servant to use predestination as an excuse for sins, claiming that predestination is a justification for not doing what is commanded, violating what is forbidden, and arguing, "Everything is predestined, I am devoid of will, and I have no power to change Allah's decree!"

He claims to be compelled, doing what he has no power to resist. When told to do what Allah has commanded, he says, "I will not do it until Allah creates in me the action." And when told to refrain from what Allah has prohibited, he says, "I will not until Allah creates repentance in my heart!"

If predestination was a valid excuse for committing sins, then no one would be blameworthy for any sin or disbelief; thus, neither

Iblis nor Pharaoh nor Nimrod nor the people of Noah or Hud or the polytheists of the Arabs would be to blame, and the falsity of this is clear.

How similar the act of those who resort to predestination in this regard is to the act of Iblis—the first to use predestination as an argument against his Lord and counter the command with predestination. When Allah, the Exalted, said to him, {Descend from it, for it is not for you to be arrogant here. So, get out; you are of the degraded} *[Al-A'raf: 13]*, his response was, {Because You have led me astray, I will surely sit in wait for them on Your straight path} *[Al-A'raf: 16]*. Instead of saying, "O Lord! I have wronged myself and made a mistake, forgive me;" he said, "O Lord! You are the one who led me astray, You are the one who misguided me!" How poor is this etiquette with Allah, the Exalted.

Thus, this argument is a satanic one, a common excuse among the wrongdoers, including the polytheists in the time of the Prophet ﷺ, where Allah, the Exalted, says, {Those who associated with Allah will say, "If Allah had willed, we would not have associated *[anything with Him]*, nor would our fathers, nor would we have prohibited anything." Likewise, those before them denied until they tasted Our punishment. Say, "Do you have any knowledge that you can produce for us? You follow not except assumption, and you are not but speculating"} *[Al-An'am: 148]*. Then He, the Exalted, says, {Say, "To Allah belongs the conclusive argument. Had He willed, He would have guided you all"} *[Al-An'am: 149]*.

These two verses from Surah Al-An'am contain numerous benefits:

**The first benefit** is that using predestination as an excuse for faults is the approach of the polytheists, who said, {If Allah had willed, we would not have associated *[anything with Him]*, nor would our fathers, nor would we have prohibited anything} *[Al-An'am: 148]*.

Therefore, anyone who uses predestination as an excuse for sins is following their path, not the path of the believing and pious.

**The second benefit** is that Allah combined in this verse both the legislative argument and the predestined will, both of which are His, and this is the truth that must be believed in because Allah said, {Say, "To Allah belongs the conclusive argument"} *[Al-An'am: 149]*, then said, {Had He willed, He would have guided you all} *[Al-An'am: 149]*.

The conclusive argument is the legislative one, reaching the depths of the heart and mingling with the mind; there is no excuse against it; since Allah sent the messengers, revealed the books, varied the signs, and provided parables; thus, the argument against the servants was established, the evidence became clear, and excuses were cut off, {Messengers bearing good news and warning so that mankind will have no argument against Allah after the messengers} *[Al-Nisa: 165]*.

He, the Exalted, is more merciful and wiser than to punish anyone who has an excuse. Then He, the Exalted, explained His decree saying, {Had He willed, He would have guided you all} *[Al-An'am: 149]*.

This is what the servants must do: to combine belief in the legislative argument and the predestined will.

Therefore, what was from these polytheists—of polytheism and disobedience—was by their will and power, which did not exit Allah's will and decree, and this is sufficient for them to bear responsibility for what they committed and to be recompensed on the Day of Judgment for what they used to do, and Allah, the Almighty, is just and does not commit injustice.

**The third benefit** is that this verse indicates that the argument of those using predestination as an excuse is invalid, where He said, {Say, "To Allah belongs the conclusive argument"} *[Al-An'am: 149]*. Meaning: If what these polytheists argue with is nothing but following assumptions and speculation; then to Allah belongs the conclusive argument!

Note the precedence of the predicate over the subject, which indicates exclusivity, so the conclusive argument belongs to Allah, not to you. Therefore, anyone who uses predestination as an excuse, their argument is invalid, and the argument belongs to Allah against them, and they have no argument against Allah.

**The Fourth Benefit**: It could be said: What these polytheists stated: {Those who associated with Allah will say, "If Allah had willed, we would not have associated *[anything with Him]*, nor would our fathers, nor would we have prohibited anything"} *[Al-An'am: 148]* Is it true or false? We say: It is true, but the point of disapproval is that they intended falsehood by it. The polytheists did not make this statement because they wanted to affirm predestination and submit to it; rather, they intended to oppose Allah's command with predestination and to justify their polytheism, and this is clear misguidance.

It is a statement of truth intended for falsehood, and thus, they deserved disapproval.

It is certain that polytheists follow conjecture and desire, and they are not seekers of the truth as evidenced by their not justifying the use of predestination as an excuse in this manner in every situation. If someone were to attack them or their gods, they would retaliate; so where is the use of predestination as an excuse here?

Consider their stance towards the Prophet ﷺ and his companions; how they harmed them, opposed them, and waged war against

them; why did they not say: If Allah had willed, the Prophet ﷺ would not have come out against us with his call; hence, we should not oppose him; because then we would be opposing Allah's will!

It becomes clear that they—and likewise, anyone who uses predestination as an excuse—are merely following their desires and nothing more.

## Responding to the Argument of Using Predestination as an Excuse for Sins

The argument of those who use predestination as an excuse for their sins and misdeeds is invalid and an ugly justification; it is impermissible for anyone to excuse themselves with it or to argue by it. This is supported by eight points:

**The first point**: This argument is invalid because it does not apply universally. If predestination were the cause for an excuse, then the condition of the cause is that it should apply universally, meaning whenever the cause exists, the ruling applies: whenever predestination is present, the excuse exists. However, this is not universally applicable, and the biggest proof of this is to say to the one who claims that predestination is an excuse for not performing obedience: why is predestination an excuse in religious obligations but not in worldly matters?!

Why do you rise to deal with worldly benefits and exert all you can to achieve them, but you do not do the same for religious benefits?!

Why, when your desires command you, you are energetic, but when your Lord commands you, you become lazy?! Is this not purely following whims?

Also, to those who argue with predestination: If matters are as you claim, then do not eat, drink, or wear clothes, and if you

are harmed, then you should submit to Allah's decree! Do not rush to eat when hungry or to drink when thirsty, and if you are afflicted with diseases: they are from Allah's decree; you must wait for Allah's decree that will remove this disease, and you should not seek treatment! And if you are burned, you should watch the fire spread in your body without moving! Because this is Allah's decree, and you have committed to doing nothing and submitting to the decree!

When someone assaults and wrongs you; you should smile in their face and say: this is Allah's decree; I must submit!

And if someone borrows money from you and does not return it, or buys your goods and does not pay you, beware of demanding anything, for this is Allah's decree, so submit to it!

Will you, the one who argues with predestination, commit to what was mentioned above?!

You know for certain that your reality is entirely contrary to this!

We see you, when afflicted with a disease in your body, knocking on every doctor's door for treatment, enduring the bitterness of medicine in pursuit of healing, so why do you not do the same for the disease of your heart caused by sins?

We see you, while ill, being ordered to take medicine which you dislike, and forbidden from food that harms you which you desire, all in pursuit of healing. We never see you refrain from taking the medicine or eating the harmful food and argue with predestination, so why do you abandon what the Sharia commands and do what it forbids and then argue with predestination?!

We see you, when offered two jobs, one with a "higher salary," you eagerly choose it over the lesser; how then do you choose

for yourself in the Hereafter what is lesser and then argue with predestination?

In conclusion: Arguing with predestination in this context is a baseless argument. If we were to apply this argument universally, people could not possibly live; thus, it is indeed an invalid and incorrect cause.

**The Second Point**: This argument is fundamentally invalid due to its contradiction with the innate nature (Fitrah) Allah has created in humans, which is to seek what benefits them and to avoid what harms them. This is clearer than to need any proof.

Therefore, if a person stood on a mountain and warned another saying: The enemy is coming, or a predator is coming, or a flood is coming, would it be in the nature of servants - whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim, believers in predestination or its deniers - to say: Isn't this by Allah's decree, then I should submit, and if Allah wills my escape, I will escape! Does anyone act this way? No one does, as it contradicts the nature Allah has instilled in people.

And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is the warner and bearer of good tidings, and Allah has described him as a warner warning of His punishment: {He is only a warner to you in advance of a severe punishment} *[Saba': 46]*. So, if he warns you of Allah's punishment, your belief in him necessarily requires you to respond to him, to flee from what brings you misfortunes, and the absence of this is evidence of the weakness of your belief or will, and not that you have no power to respond, thus revealing this argument to be invalid.

**The Third Point**: This argument used is one of evasion and obstinacy, not one of knowledge. Only those who deceive their senses and are obstinate argue with predestination here.

Meaning: Everyone who uses this argument to negate Allah's commands knows within themselves that they are merely making excuses and arguing without basis, not that after diligent and scholarly consideration they have concluded that they should not perform acts of obedience to Allah. This is clear and indisputable to any fair-minded person.

Let me say: Arguing with predestination falls under what is called in our era: "The art of evading responsibility"; it's easiest for a person to blame others to clear themselves and escape the guilt and the uncomfortable feeling of error that troubles them!

**The Fourth Point**: A person either wishes to obey Allah or does not. As for the one who desires to obey Allah, they would not make excuses with predestination; instead, they would obey, because complete willingness combined with full capability results in action by Allah's permission. Allah, the Exalted, has facilitated worship, made it easy for His servants, and has not put any barrier between them and it.

As for those who refrain from obedience, we know for certain that they do not desire it, as nothing prevents them, and if they make excuses with predestination, we know their claim is false and they have no excuse.

Thus, do not deceive yourself, O you who argue with predestination; you simply do not want to obey! Put things in their proper places and call them by their names!

**The Fifth Point**: To the one who uses predestination as an excuse for committing sins, it can be asked: What informed you that Allah had decreed for you to disobey Him before you committed the sin? We all do not know what Allah has decreed until after it occurs. Before it happens, we do not know what is intended for us. Do you have knowledge before committing the sin that Allah had

decreed it for you? The answer is definitely no. So, why did you not consider that Allah had decreed obedience for you and obey Him?

I mean, if I say to you: Pray or repent to Allah, and you say: Allah has not decreed for me to pray; when He decrees it for me, I will pray!

How do you know that He has not written prayer for you? You do not know what will happen shortly; so why not assume in yourself that Allah has written for you to pray and then hasten to it?!

It becomes clear that a person's argument about something they do before the action is invalid, because the evidence is preceding what it indicates.

That is, you — who argue with predestination — assumed that Allah did not decree the performance of obedience for you and then refrained from performing it; why did you not consider that Allah decreed the performance of obedience for you and obey; since predestination is a hidden secret known only to Allah, and we do not know what He has decreed until after it occurs. If you refrained from obedience, claiming that you are submitting to predestination; why did you not reverse the situation and advance towards it saying: I am submitting to predestination?!

Would you not, if it were said to you that there are two roads to the city you wish to reach, the first: a paved, safe road, and the second: a difficult, dangerous road; would you not take the safe one? You would say: Yes. So, we say: Then why, in your dealings with your Lord, do you take the dangerous path filled with perils, and leave the safe path which Allah, the Exalted, has guaranteed safety for those who take it; {Those who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice - those will have security, and they are rightly guided} *[Al-An'am: 82]*.

**The Sixth Point**: The Sharia prohibits this argument. If you believe in Allah, you must adhere to His Sharia, whether you fully understand this matter or not.

Arguing with predestination against obeying the command is prohibited by Sharia. As reported in the two Sahihs (Bukhari: 6605, Muslim: 2647) from Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, he said: "We were with the Prophet ﷺ in a funeral in Baqi' al-Gharqad when he said, 'There is not one of you but his place in Paradise or Hell has been written,' a man from the crowd said: 'Should we not then rely (on this destiny and abandon our deeds)?' - And in another narration by Muslim (2647): 'O Messenger of Allah, should we not then rely on our book (predestination) and abandon the deeds?' *[This man was asking the Prophet ﷺ if they could excuse themselves with predestination and what has been written for them, hence abandoning deeds and relying on destiny.]* The Prophet ﷺ said, 'No, do deeds, for everyone is facilitated that for which he is created. Those of the happy ones will be facilitated to do the deeds of the happy ones, and those of the miserable ones will be facilitated to do the deeds of the miserable ones.' Then he recited the verse from Allah, the Exalted: {As for he who gives and fears Allah And believes in the best *[reward]*, We will ease him toward ease. But as for he who withholds and considers himself free of need and denies the best *[reward]*, We will ease him toward difficulty} *[Al-Layl: 5 - 10]*".

Thus, this is something the Sharia explicitly prohibits; as indicated by his statement in the hadith: (No), meaning do not do this, and it is obligatory for a Muslim to cease.

**The Seventh Point**: Beyond being prohibited in Sharia, this argument with predestination offers no benefit; those who use it are arguing with something useless, merely wasting their lives and depriving themselves of their due share.

The example of one who argues with predestination is like a person to whom a spark from a fire flew and landed on his house, starting a fire. When told to save his house and extinguish the fire, he said: "Wait! Isn't this spark from Allah's decree? Then I must submit and wait for a decree from Allah to extinguish it! He sat watching his house until it was completely burned down."

Would any sensible person do this?!

Yet, the condition of the one who argues with predestination regarding sins is even worse; because the one whose house was reached by the spark had no role in it, but the one who argues with predestination about sins has led themselves into the situation of sin and thus deserves punishment.

It is better for you to obey your Lord and follow His commands, and to refrain from what He has forbidden, than to complain about your fate and make excuses. By obeying Him, you fulfill His decree with His decree, and you escape from one decree to another.

Here, it is beneficial to mention the story reported by both Bukhari and Muslim, where Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, upon approaching Sham and learning of the outbreak of a plague, decided to return. Abu Ubaida ibn Al-Jarrah said, "Are we fleeing from Allah's decree?" Umar replied, "If only someone else had said this, O Abu Ubaida. Yes, we flee from Allah's decree to Allah's decree. Do you see, if you had camels and you descended into a valley with two slopes, one lush and the other barren, isn't it that if you grazed in the lush area, you did so by Allah's decree, and if you grazed in the barren area, you did so by Allah's decree?"

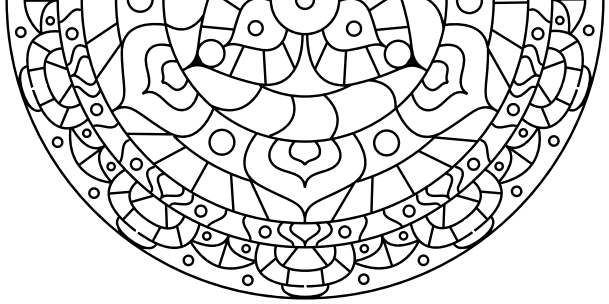
**The Eighth and Final Point**: To those who justify their negligence in fulfilling Allah's rights by predestination, it can be said: In addition to falling into the initial sin and engaging in something futile, you have committed a second sin. You aim

to oppose Allah's command with His decree, and to confront the decree with the Sharia, which contradicts Sharia and is disrespectful towards Allah, the Exalted. This situation is akin to Iblis's stance when he said: {My Lord, because You have put me in error, I will surely make *[disobedience]* attractive to them on earth, and I will mislead them all} *[Al-Hijr: 39]*.

Therefore, anyone whom Allah wishes happiness for, if they fall into sin and negligence, they should say what Adam and Eve said: {Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers} *[Al-A'raf: 23]*. As for the one doomed to failure, they resort to the same justification as Iblis: {Because You have put me in error} *[Al-Hijr: 39]*. So, reflect on yourself: whom do you follow, and with whom do you wish to be associated?

## *For further benefit*

I recommend referring to a valuable treatise titled "The Argument with Predestination" by Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, available as a standalone print and found in the compilation of Fatwas (Vol. 8, pp. 303-307).



# Chapter Thirteen: The Relativity of Truth

In its linguistic root in, the word "truth" (al-Haqq) indicates the solidity and correctness of a thing. Truth and reality refer to the steadfast matter that cannot justifiably be denied, the judgment that matches reality, and it is the opposite of falsehood.

Allah, the Exalted, is the Absolute Truth. His existence, lordship, divinity, perfection, speech, actions, promises, the encounter with Him, His messengers, His books, and His religion, Islam, are all truth. Everything He has said is truth, as stated: {That is because Allah is the Truth, and that which they call upon besides Him is falsehood} *[Al-Hajj: 62]*.

Our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is truth; his prophethood is truth, his Sharia is truth, he was only revealed the truth, and nothing but the truth came from his mouth, as Allah says: {He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to make it prevail over all religion. And sufficient is Allah as a Witness} *[Al-Fath: 28]*. And in the two Sahihs (Bukhari: 1120, Muslim: 769), it is mentioned that the Prophet ﷺ would say in his night prayer: "You are The Truth, Your promise is true, meeting You is true, Your

word is true, Paradise is true, Hell is true, the prophets are true, Muhammad is true, and the Hour is true."

## Absolute Truth

Absolute truth is fixed and exists independently of any subjective consideration. For instance, the fact that the sun is currently risen is a truth, regardless of whether we believe it or not, and "one plus one equals two" is a fixed truth unrelated to our belief. The wrongful killing of innocents is universally wrong, a fixed truth, and so on.

Thus, there are truths that are independent in their affirmation, unaffected negatively or positively by our mental conception of them.

## Can We Attain the Truth?

Yes, the truth can be sought and reached. It is not inherently ambiguous or confusing. If it were, Allah would not have commanded us to follow it, nor would He have forbidden us from deviating from it, concealing it, or mixing it with falsehood. Allah says: {O people, the truth has come to you from your Lord. So, whoever is guided is only guided for *[the benefit of]* his soul. And whoever errs only errs against it} *[Yunus: 108]*.

## What is the Source of Truth?

The source of truth is from Allah, the Exalted; He established it, created beings with the innate ability to recognize and be guided to it, provided means to perceive it, facilitated ways to access it, established evidence for it, and sent messengers with it. Allah says: {The truth is from your Lord} *[Hud: 17]*, and {Allah establishes the truth with His words} *[Yunus: 82]*. No one disputes this except those who are blind, as Allah says: {Then is he who knows that what has

been revealed to you from your Lord is the truth like one who is blind?} *[Al-Ra'd: 19]*.

After the prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ, the people of Islam are those who have attained the truth among the followers of religions, as Allah says: {And those who believe and do righteous deeds and believe in what has been sent down upon Muhammad - and it is the truth from their Lord - He will remove from them their misdeeds and amend their condition. That is because those who disbelieve follow falsehood, and those who believe follow the truth from their Lord} *[Muhammad: 2 - 3]*.

## Concise Principles Guiding the Correct Approach to the Subject of "Truth"

The topic is regulated by establishing four matters:

1. The truth exists, regardless of our adherence to it or lack thereof.
2. The truth that Allah obliges us to follow is clear and not ambiguous or confusing.
3. One must seek the truth and strive to attain it.
4. Truth is accessible, and Allah has facilitated it for those who seek it, as He says: {And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good} *[Al-'Ankabut: 69]*.

## The Meaning of the Relativity of Truth

The term "relativity of truth" implies that truth varies from one person to another, and from one time to another; hence, all truths are relative. This concept is embraced by some with questionable ideologies. Proponents of this view claim that truth is distributed

among all people in terms of open probability, and things do not have a single intrinsic truth.

This argument often surfaces in debates over religious issues, used as an evasion from complying with what does not align with personal desires.

Some even escalate the matter to advocate for intellectual chaos, claiming what you see as true and what your opponent sees as true are both valid, even if it involves a different religion, a misguided sect, or a reprehensible act. Thus, you cannot be certain of your correctness or the wrongness of others, much less critique them.

They say, look at honey: a healthy person finds it sweet, while a sick person finds it bitter, yet it remains the same substance; similarly, so is truth!

Naturally, this is a fallacy known as "false analogy" because honey is inherently sweet, whether tasted or not. The sick person perceives it as bitter due to a condition that hinders the proper taste, not because it is bitter. Similarly, claiming the sun isn't rising just because someone put a barrier between themselves, and the sun is unacceptable!

Thus, the relativism of truth could serve as a slogan under which several types of doubts, deviations, and even acts of disbelief are propagated. This approach might be adorned with the allure of progress, modernization, tolerance, and openness.

## The Philosophical Origin of the Claim of Truth Relativity

The origin of this idea can be traced back to the Sophist philosophy of Subjectivism, one of the three famous Sophist trends: Contrarianism, Subjectivism, and Agnosticism.

Subjectivism: Philosophically speaking - albeit loosely, as it doesn't represent a comprehensive intellectual doctrine but rather a form of nihilism cloaked in thought and philosophy - its proponents believe that truths follow beliefs. Thus, what you believed to be ancient is indeed ancient, what you believed to be recent is recent, what you believed to exist does exist, and what you believed to be non-existent is non-existent. When I say "non-existent," they claim it is so in reality, not just in belief. Hence, the individual is the measure of all things, and in terms of sources of knowledge, the mental affirmation is considered primary. Knowledge does not pertain to the known subject but to the knowing self.

This school of thought is attributed to a Greek philosopher named Protagoras, reported to have died in 410 BC.

## The Relativity of Truth in the Modern Era

This ancient thought was embraced by various contemporary intellectual currents, atheistic and otherwise, finding in it their desired goal and a means to achieve their objectives, though not all adopt it to the same extent.

It's beneficial to delve a bit into this topic since some young people might repeat these ideas without fully understanding their implications, outcomes, or the doctrines and thoughts they intersect with.

One of the most prominent contemporary doctrines and philosophies that have adopted the relativity of truth to an extreme and exaggerated extent, giving the ancient philosophy of Subjectivism a new attire, is what's called Postmodernism. Some

may decorate this orientation with the allure of progress and development, tolerance, and openness[9].

It's a philosophical trend that doubts truth, reason, identity, and objectivity, harboring an anarchic, nihilistic, and irrational philosophy. It views everything as unstable, without a solid foundation, and asserts that there are no absolute truths.

Their most prominent idea is absurd relativism; there are no fixed truths that reason can reach, no mistakes it can identify and correct, and no criterion to differentiate between right and wrong. This philosophy entails the denial of moral or legal foundations, adopting the sole principle that everything is permissible.

Based on skepticism and extreme pluralism, leading to a loss of identity, it invalidates all religious truths and dissolves all universally agreed-upon truths; truth becomes relative, individually shaped, and not imposed from outside. There's no room to judge anything as correct or incorrect; everything in life is relative, with no centrality to anything, making all things equal.

This approach seeks to dismantle what is termed "binary oppositions": good and evil, right and wrong, beautiful and ugly, etc., suggesting that all such dichotomies should be transcended.

In their view, all cultural products are equal; therefore, it's impossible to establish any thought or adhere to any belief firmly because, fundamentally, nothing exists! Nothing, according to them, inherently possesses a principle of stability, nor is there an origin that can be substantiated! This is a denial of reason!

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(9) Postmodernism refers to the stage following Modernism, which concluded with the end of World War II.

Their stated goal, openly affirmed in their writings, is to reach a stage where certainties end, foundations dissolve, and the world becomes a fluid system; without certainty, meaning, or purpose, leaving humans without identity, belief, or boundaries.

## The Danger of This Philosophy

If this philosophical trend didn't pose a threat to Muslims' adherence to their religion and creed, the matter would be less significant. However, this trend actively undermines religion, distorts its principles, instills doubt among its followers, and I summarize this in two highly dangerous efforts they make:

**Firstly**: Turning beliefs into notions dependent on the level of consciousness, changing with the ages. This includes the belief in Allah, suggesting it varies with human intellectual levels and mental and psychological perceptions. Whether one perceives Allah as perfect or flawed, or even conceives of Him as a concept without reality or existence, is all supposedly valid. Every belief about Allah is deemed correct, a notion grossly blasphemous.

**Secondly**: Disrupting the meaning of the divine message through symbolism and interpretation, denying any explicit meaning to any religious text, or that there's any intended meaning from the speaker. Thus, Quranic evidence and Prophetic traditions can mean anything to anyone, open to reinterpretation based on whims. Understand worship in the verse: {Worship Allah} *[Al-Nisa: 36]* however you like, interpret prayer and almsgiving in {Establish prayer and give alms} *[Al-Nisa: 77]* as pleases you, etc., without any scholarly restraint or religious deterrent.

This constitutes a complete detachment from this religion and heresy in Allah's signs, as Allah says: {Indeed, those who inject deviation into Our verses are not concealed from Us} *[Fussilat: 40]*.

These resemble those Allah describes: {And those who disbelieve say, "Do not listen to this Quran and speak nonsense about it, perhaps you will overcome"} *[Fussilat: 26]*.

## Critique of the Doctrine of Truth Relativity

Discussing the critique of this doctrine would require extensive elaboration, so here I'll only highlight a few points:

**Firstly**, this doctrine is fundamentally destructive to religion, ethics, and every form of social organization. Its influence renders the establishment of religion impossible, disrupts social harmony, and dissolves state governance. A simple reflection on its core reveals this quite plainly.

**Secondly**, it's irrational for anyone to seriously adopt this doctrine; it primarily serves as a tactic for stubbornness and argumentation, utilized solely for the purpose of creating discord. Consistent adherence to this principle across all matters is unfeasible; anyone claiming to do so is engaging in deceit. This inherent contradiction is evident in their conduct, especially since they frequently assert "No one possesses absolute truth" while treating this statement itself as an absolute truth.

Another contradiction is their tendency to criticize and belittle those committed to their faith, accusing them of backwardness or regression. This contradicts the relativism principle, which should theoretically prevent them from taking any firm stance on any issue, indicating that relativism is not a genuine intellectual stance but rather a pretext to achieve certain ends.

**Thirdly**, against the statement "There are no absolute truths," one can question if this assertion itself is an absolute truth. Affirmation collapses their principle, as it acknowledges the

existence of an absolute truth. Denial means their statement cannot impose obligation or advocate for its acceptance, making the claim self-defeating.

**Fourthly**, this doctrine necessitates validating every viewpoint; our belief in the falseness of their doctrine should, by the logic of truth relativism, be recognized as valid. Thus, by concurring with us that their doctrine is false, they validate our refutation of their doctrine, which alone suffices to demonstrate its invalidity.

**Fifthly**, this philosophy starts with sophistry and ends in heresy. Initially, it equates truth and falsehood, allowing individuals to choose whatever aligns with their desires, equating valid beliefs and actions with invalid ones, which constitutes disbelief and heresy.

**Sixthly**: People's lives cannot be upright based on this doctrine, and they will become corrupt without any possibility of rectification. This is because, based on the elimination of absolute truth, it necessitates them to justify anyone doing anything they desire and see as beneficial, even if it involves killing innocents, dismembering children, raping women, and infringing on others' rights. If opposed on the grounds that their act is a crime, they could coolly respond: "What you see as a crime, I see as pleasure, and truth is relative!"

Incidentally, extremists like the Khawarij and their ilk would find in this doctrine a justification for unjustly killing Muslims and those under protection; they could argue, when condemned, that "What you see as corruption, we see as jihad, and truth is relative!" Do you see the corruption to which this doctrine leads?

**Seventhly**, the claim of truth relativism is unsubstantiated, which alone invalidates it. This can be clarified by asking proponents: What evidence supports that all truths are relative? If they claim to have evidence, their stance collapses from its foundation, as

their doctrine inherently rejects the principle of relying on fixed evidence. If they concede the absence of evidence, their claim also falls, as statements without evidence are not valid among rational thinkers, rendering their position untenable.

**Eighthly**, sensory experience, reality, and unanimous human agreement all testify against this claim. Humans, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, agree on absolute truths, such as the ugliness of injustice, the virtue of kindness to parents, the commandability of compassion towards the poor, the obligation of wages for work, and that every event has a cause, among countless other universally acknowledged truths. This universal consensus on absolute truths sufficiently disproves the notion of truth relativism.

**Ninthly**, to those adopting truth relativism, consider if your child falls ill and two doctors offer conflicting advice: one warns against surgery due to life-threatening risks, while the other insists on it for the same reasons. What action would you take? Adhering to your doctrine, how would you proceed? It's unlikely any sensible person would take such a risk with their child's life. Thus, you must endeavor to discern and decide between the opinions, ultimately recognizing one as correct and the other as incorrect, thereby contradicting your doctrine. Why would you risk your physical well-being but gamble with matters of faith?

**Tenth and finally**: The problem with these individuals is that they've fallen into the fallacy of "hasty generalization."

They say: "Truth is relative," like how one might view a painting as beautiful while another sees it as ugly. The issue with this fallacy is, can it be said: Are all things like the painting?

This is akin to someone who has benefited from eye drops and then recommends it to everyone with an eye condition, which is a

clear mistake; because if the drops worked for one disease, does it mean they will work for all diseases?

Correctly, some truths are absolute, as previously mentioned. These are abstract truths based on solid, reliable evidence or logical axioms, etc.; such truths are absolute, stable, and unaffected by our beliefs in them.

And there are relative truths, dependent on variables or personal tastes. Experimental science, which bases its verification on variables, changes as its standards change. Similarly, aesthetic judgments are relative; my view of a painting as beautiful and yours as ugly is a matter of relativity. These truths are inherently relative.

It becomes clear that the disagreement with "advocates of relativism" lies in treating all truths as relative and entirely negating absolute truths.

A question arises: It might be said that Muslims who advocate for the relativity of truth don't mean the above but rather refer to matters of jurisprudential discretion in Sharia, evidenced by the vast disagreements among jurists; no one can definitively claim the correctness of their opinion over another's. What is the response?

The answer can be summarized in five points:

**The first point**: The generalization they've made is broader than the subject matter; thus, it would have been more appropriate to use language that conveys the intended meaning—namely, the matters of jurisprudential discretion—without such an overgeneralization that confuses truth with falsehood.

**The second point**: When we say there are absolute truths, it does not mean they are known to everyone; one might grasp or miss them due to ignorance, limitation, or other reasons.

**The third point**: Issues vary in their level of clarity; some are axiomatic, where rational people agree, and others are evident, with compelling evidence making them undeniable to those who seek the truth, like the validity of Islam among religions. For such issues, there is no excuse for those with knowledge to oppose them. There are also issues of lesser clarity, the jurisprudential matters where evidence does not make the truth as apparent; such topics do not warrant opposition to those who differ, though it's believed that truth in these matters is singular and known to Allah. Whoever attains it gains double reward, and whoever errs still earns a single reward. Thus, the concept of truth relativism and its implications differ from handling disagreements and those who differ in jurisprudential matters.

**The fourth point**: Even in jurisprudential matters, choices are not based on mere preference; there are established rules for exercising jurisprudential reasoning, dealing with different opinions and evidence, and making weighted decisions among them.

**The firth point**: The problem with some individuals is engaging in religious or other matters beyond their understanding or delving into specialized areas without proper comprehension or the ability to weigh different opinions adequately, lacking the necessary epistemological tools. This leads to confusion and the assertion that matters are relative and indeterminable due to their lack of understanding, whereas proper understanding and approach would not lead to such a conclusion.

In conclusion, this is some advice on three matters:

**The first**: Allah Almighty said: {So what is after the truth except misguidance?} *[Yunus: 32]*. Therefore, one who knows the truth should not deviate from it, no matter how many attractive slogans there are.

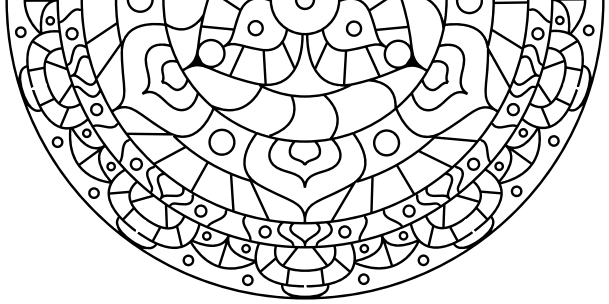
**The second**: Let us beware of ambiguous rules and vague statements; for perhaps in their stuffing lies deadly poison!

**The third**: Respecting a deserving opponent, engaging in good dialogue, and adhering to manners is one thing; melting away fundamentals, abandoning steadfast beliefs, constants, and values is another. Confusing the two situations is a grave mistake.

And Allah knows best.

### *For further benefit*

Those interested in this topic are advised to read the verses of truth in the Quran, which appears in more than one hundred places. Reflecting on them will, by the will of Allah, fulfill your quest.



# Chapter Fourteen: Between Doubt and Certainty

This topic is among the most significant topics of the books, since it discusses the cause of salvation and a cause for destruction. It's a conversation about bliss and torment; certainty in Allah and His religion—which is the complete knowledge unmingled with doubt, necessitating action—is this bliss. Its opposite, which is doubt—hesitation between two possibilities without inclination towards either—if related to the fundamentals of religion, leads to confusion and torment, and a path to torment.

What's required and beneficial for us is certainty in religious demands. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allah, and that I am the Messenger of Allah. No servant meets Allah with these two, not doubting them, but will enter Paradise" (Muslim: 27). Hence, certainty is a condition for benefiting from the declaration of faith.

Certainty is the heart's nourishment, cure, healing, life, light, strength, and pleasure. Certainty is the foundation of religion and the mark of its people {The believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and then doubt not}.

Certainty is the path to guidance and success: {And those who believe in what has been revealed to you, *[O Muhammad]*, and what was revealed before you, and of the Hereafter they are certain. Those are upon *[right]* guidance from their Lord, and it is those who are the successful} *[Al-Baqarah: 4 - 5]*.

The absence of certainty is a characteristic of the doomed, as Allah says about the disbelievers: {And when it is said to them, "Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth and the Hour *[is coming]*—no doubt about it," you say, "We know not what the Hour is. We assume only assumption, and we are not convinced"} *[Al-Jathiyah: 32]*.

Doubt is pain in the heart, constriction in the chest, and a torment that overtakes the soul. Unlike certainty, which is coolness, tranquility, peace, expansiveness, sweetness, joy, and happiness, {So whoever Allah wants to guide - He expands his breast to *[contain]* Islam; and whoever He wants to misguide - He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he were climbing into the sky. Thus does Allah place defilement upon those who do not believe} *[Al-Zumar: 22]*.

## Why Should We Discuss This Topic?

Because being aware of it is more important than many other things! Today, there's a bitter struggle occurring in the souls of some youth; they vacillate in their religion between doubt and certainty! Strong doubts assail some of them, related to major faith realities: belief in Allah, the truth of Muhammad's prophethood, the validity of Islam, the certainty of the Hereafter, etc. They aspire to ascend to the skies of certainty, but doubts pull them down! Truly, it's a crippling concern and a deadly confusion! The matter is profoundly serious... There are contemporary skeptical philosophies widespread, meddling with the minds of many

youths today, leading them into a vortex of confusion and loss, leaving them unable to see any light[10].

Everyone who is aware of this reality has a significant responsibility towards these youths: to help them reach safety, to help them understand something clearly at last, to make them feel tranquility and stability, to relieve them of this heavy burden, and to allow their hearts to rest and their souls to find peace. We must realize that we live in the shadow of overwhelming campaigns of doubt, and fierce waves of it, and that the enemies of Allah spread doubts day and night, lying in wait for the youth on every path to deter them from Allah's way; they sow doubts about the existence of Allah, His lordship and divinity, His book, His prophet, His Sunnah, fate, the unseen, and even the legislative rulings, and even in the basic rational concepts... and by Allah, I have not exaggerated a bit!

A few decades ago, there was no need to address this topic as we do today, but the situation has now changed; the world has not only become a small village but rather resembles a small room; what is presented in the far West - for example, Chicago - or the far East - for example, Tokyo - is accessible at the same moment, and you interact with it while you're relaxing on your couch at home!

This reality has been exploited to the utmost by those who stray from the path; atheists, secularists, and all sorts of deviants have marshaled their forces - through the internet, social media, and

(10) I once engaged in a conversation with a young man who had been swept away by some of these philosophies, to the point where he doubted most things, if not everything; to the extent that I wondered whether he was even certain that I was sitting in front of him, or if he doubted that as well!

satellite channels - and sharpened their arrows to strike the weak of faith fatally, so we seek Allah's help.

## What is the Way to Shield Our Children from Doubts?

The trust that Allah has placed upon you, O father, mother, teacher, educator, and official, Allah will ask you about it; so prepare an answer to His question, "Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock," this is the speech of the one who does not speak out of desire ﷺ. (Bukhari: 893, Muslim: 1829)

In short: with our children, we need to apply three things here: immunization, guidance, and upbringing.

As for **immunization**: for the pervasive issues that are raised today, which are a source of confusion and doubts, and which their minds can comprehend, it's necessary to give them a dose of immunization (vaccination) against them. You say to them: there's a mistaken idea which is so-and-so, and the correct view is so-and-so, in an easy, clear manner that they understand.

If the initiative comes from you; then you take the lead, and ensure that if a doubt reaches your child, he has - by Allah's will - a primary line of defense; as he will say: this is what my father told me about and explained its mistake; so, the storm passes by calmly.

The dangerous "viruses" - pathogens - that are widespread can only be avoided through vaccination, the "virus" harmful to bodies is dangerous, and the "virus" harmful to religions is more dangerous. The physical vaccination that is safe is important, and the moral vaccination that is safe is more important.

As for **cultural guidance**: we are in dire need of guiding our children's sources of knowledge and their cultural platforms: whom they follow, to whom they listen, and what they watch.

Smart monitoring has become essential today; scorpions and snakes are widespread, and perhaps they wear soft, ornate clothes, but underneath the clothes, poison drips!

***Though the serpent's touch may seem gentle,***

***in its fangs, upon turning, lies the ruin.***

As for **education**: We need faith-based persuasive education. It is essential to distinguish between two states: faith by habit or religion by upbringing, and faith by conviction and religion by certainty. It's a reality we must openly discuss: a large portion of our youth, both boys and girls, have faith of the first type: raised in a Muslim environment, by Muslim parents, practicing religious rituals out of tradition, often without truly experiencing the taste of faith or reaching its sweetness. This faith—faith of habit and routine—usually does not benefit its holder when tested with doubts or when swarmed by skepticism. The slightest breeze may sway them unless Allah bestows His mercy on them.

On the other hand, the person with faith of conviction and certainty flourishes in well-being away from the misguidances of trials by Allah's grace; for they are on insight, and on light from their Lord, and on clear evidence from their Lord, {Those *[Allah]* has written faith in their hearts and supported them with a spirit from Him} *[Al-Mujadilah: 22]*, embedding faith in their hearts so it does not waver, and supplying them with His support so the thorns of doubt do not afflict them. One of them prays because they are convinced of prayer, and they do what they are commanded and refrain from what they are forbidden because they are certain that this is the correct path; thus, they approach it joyfully and contentedly; how then can doubts tamper with their certainty when they are on a light from their Lord!

## Advice for Safety from Doubts

Among the grand objectives that those of understanding care for is the pursuit of achieving certainty, increasing faith, and repelling doubts and harms from this faith, {and *[so]* those who have believed will increase in faith}.

O you who seek certainty: recognize the value of what you seek; it is the highest of ranks; arm yourself with patience and high resolve, and seek help from Allah, before and after.

Let these six pieces of advice be ever remembered by you:

**First**: The Quran, then the Quran... It is the strong rope, the guide to certainty. He, Exalted be He, said: {O you who believe, if you obey a group from those who were given the Scripture, they will turn you back, after your belief, *[to being]* unbelievers. And how could you disbelieve while to you are recited the verses of Allah, and among you is His Messenger? And whoever holds fast to Allah has indeed been guided to a straight path} *[Ali 'Imran: 100 - 101]*.

Look at the state of the believing jinn; as soon as they heard the Quran, certainty settled in their hearts: {They said, "Indeed, we have heard a marvelous Quran. It guides to the right course, and we have believed in it, and we will never associate with our lord anyone"} *[Al-Jinn: 1 - 2]*.

Reciting the Quran with contemplation is a daily spiritual nourishment, so be keen to nourish your soul with it, lest your strength falter, and beware of abandoning the Quran!

**Second**: Knowing the names of Allah and His attributes and contemplating their meanings; it is among the broadest gates to certainty; you must devote your time and attention to it; for those

who seek Allah through His names and attributes are guaranteed happiness in every aspect.

**Third**: Studying the biography and evidence of prophethood and the noble characteristics of Muhammad ﷺ; for being content with him as a prophet is a foundational pillar in reaching certainty, and this study is a means leading to it.

**Fourth**: Studying the virtues of Islam, its beauty, and its perfection; this significant cause elevates you in the levels of certainty to high degrees, and for whom the greatness of Islam is settled in his heart, even if mountains were to shift from their places, his certainty would not be shaken by an inch. If you want to know the tremendous impact of this subject, look at the state of those who converted from disbelief to Islam; you will find that the virtues of Islam have had a significant effect on many of them(11).

And unfortunately, some of us do not appreciate this blessing we are in. Therefore, it is essential to focus on this topic and remind others of it.

**Fifth**: The careful study of the oneness of Allah's lordship, the evidence of Allah's existence and His greatness, and contemplation

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(11) I once attended a gathering where one of the preachers was inviting a non-believer to Islam; he mentioned some of its virtues to him; then he said: "What do you think about entering Islam?" The man replied, in essence: "I will not say that I want to enter Islam, I am honored to enter this Islam!"

And I attended another gathering where the preacher was inviting a woman to enter Islam; he was elaborately explaining its virtues, and she was attentively writing down what he said in a notebook she had. During his talk, she stopped him and said: "You have all this goodness, and you keep it to yourselves; why haven't we heard about this before?!"

of the cosmic and legislative signs that indicate this, which instill certainty and stability in the heart, and obedience and worship in the limbs.

**Sixth**: Beware of the things that weaken certainty and undermine it, and block all paths that lead to this, and do not lend an ear to the devils among humans, their clips, sites, books, and accounts. No matter what you risk, do not gamble with your religion; safety is incomparable, and do not say: I know the reality, and I can respond to the opposition! Do not take risks; the well-grounded scholars are enough for you, and swimming in the depths of the seas is only for those who are fully qualified! Also, beware of listening to the doubts of your companion or others, as they might seep into your heart. Do not roam around the sanctuary; seek safety.

*True safety from Salma and her neighbor lies,*

*in not passing by the valley where their essence abides.*

## Advice for Those Caught in the Traps of Doubt

These pieces of advice, with Allah's success, benefit those who seek goodness and wish to recover from the disease of doubt. Here are sixteen pieces of advice:

**First**: If you encounter doubt in a religious matter, do not despair; beware of being among those who worship Allah on the edge, ready to turn on their heels. Allah is with the patient and the truthful. Be truthful to Allah, and He will affirm your truth. Rely on Him, ask Him with a present heart for your healing from your disease, and anticipate a near relief; for those who are sincere will find deliverance, those who support Allah, Allah supports them, and those who remember Allah, Allah remembers them.

**Second**: You may be afflicted with doubt because of a sin you have committed; so, make repentance. Beware of being among those punished for their misdeeds, replaced from certainty to doubt, from tranquility to confusion. For those distanced from faith are distanced from security. Know then that there is no escape from this predicament except to rush to your Lord with repentance, seeking forgiveness, and pleading.

**Third**: The treatment for doubt in its preliminary stages is to overlook it; do not magnify it in your heart, nor repeatedly stir it up or reconsider it; it might just be a fleeting moment that will soon pass. Whatever attacks you, divert yourself with something beneficial or permissible.

**Fourth**: It's crucial to differentiate between real doubts and compulsive obsession. The former is treated with knowledge. The latter is treated medically: with Islamic medicine, through frequent remembrance of Allah and seeking refuge with Him from Satan. And physical medicine, perhaps treatment by a trusted doctor or psychologist, could be a means to healing by Allah's permission.

**Fifth**: The persistence of doubts is among the most harmful things to the heart; hasten to treat it. A wise person would not be content living under the rule of doubts but would promptly seek treatment as quickly as possible to enjoy the coolness of certainty. Therefore, determination and resolve are necessary to cut through doubts, so strive and exert effort. Know that neglecting doubts may lead you to depths of misguidance, bringing its bearer to perilous ends, and recognizing the problem early is more effective in treatment. Remember that the truth is noble and precious, not attained by those who turn away from it. Those with ill intentions will not comprehend the proofs that dispel their doubts, nor will they benefit from them; so be humble and sincere to the truth.

**Sixth**: Seek the truth and guidance where Abraham, peace be upon him, sought them: {And he said, "Indeed, I will go to my Lord; He will guide me"} *[Al-Saffat: 99]*. Be sincere to Allah, seek refuge and plead, {and whoever believes in Allah, He will guide his heart} *[Al-Taghabun: 11]*.

**Seventh**: Doubt is a disease in the heart, and most doubts are due to ignorance; so, learn what you are ignorant of and find perplexing from a reliable source; this is your medicine, and healing is near, by Allah's permission. Know that most ignorance of the Sharia's reality is due to lack of concern, not lack of understanding! The Sharia is clear, without ambiguity, praise be to Allah; so be eager to learn. Depend, after Allah, on trustworthy scholars, and benefit from the advice of those who are sincere, not those with ulterior motives.

***Ignorance is a deadly disease, and its cure...***

***consists of two things in composition sure:***

***a text from the Quran or from the Sunnah pure,***

***and the physician, that scholarly sage devout and secure.***

**Eighth**: Hold firmly to the principle of reconciling what is clear with what is ambiguous; so, if you doubt a matter, give precedence to what aligns or comes closest to your certainty, build the unknown upon the known, and use what you are certain of as a basis to deal with what you doubt.

**Ninth**: There must be beneficial opposition when faced with overwhelming doubts! This includes countering with what precaution dictates; and precaution is always to adhere to what Islam prescribes; for there is no safer refuge from fears than it. He who follows what is in it is safe in every respect and will lose nothing; unlike those who stray from its path, as some have said:

*What drew me to the faith is that its proof is strong,*

*and fearing all harm by its denial prolonged.*

*And what made disbelief repulsive to me is its clear corruption,*

*and fearing all harm by its pursuit's disruption.*

**Tenth**: Progress step by step to reach your goal. If you are afflicted with numerous doubts, tackle them one after another, and do not attempt to research them all at once, as this will complicate their resolution.

**Eleventh**: Beware that your doubt does not turn into denial and rejection. What you doubt its confirmation or are perplexed about, you have no right to deny. Let doubt remain as doubt, for it is a problem that will disappear soon by Allah's permission, whereas denial without evidence is ignorance and danger. Remember: Lack of comprehension—among the wise—does not negate the truth. There is no correlation between lack of knowledge and the judgment of something to be false. Denial requires evidence, and the doubter does not have evidence.

**Twelfth**: Preponderance substitutes for certainty. When full certainty is unattainable, preponderance stands in its place, offering you leeway, and the rational act upon what is most likely and ignore their doubts. This means that some people, when faced with religious doubts, say: Either complete certainty or nothing! They want a "100% cure," as they say, and will not move from their doubts without this, even though they can progress from doubt to certainty through preponderance; for example, 60% is a good step that can lead to 100% by Allah's will, so comfort yourself with this and be at ease! Hence, for the doubter, preponderance is a beneficial approach, and through it, one can attain the breezes of certainty if not its sweetness. {If it does not reach it in abundance,

then a drizzle} *[Al-Baqarah: 265]*. And a worn-out garment, as they say, is better than nudity!

**Thirteenth**: Do not doubt what you do not understand in detail. Some people equate the unknown with the doubted, doubting everything from the Sharia they do not understand in detail, thus drowning in waves of doubt from this angle; and this is a mistake. Doubt is one thing, and ignorance or not grasping the details is another.

To illustrate this with an example: In our lives, there are many things we accept without understanding their details, and this ignorance has not been a barrier to dealing with them; for instance, most people do not understand how sound physically travels through mobile or telephones, yet they use them without problem, and it has not been an issue for them; we have not heard of anyone who says: Either I understand how it works, or I will not use it! Therefore, it is possible to accept what you do not understand in detail from the truths of the Sharia, destiny, the unseen, and others, and lack of understanding—then—will not be a barrier to the establishment of faith.

**Fourteenth**: Differentiate between what is impossible by habit and what is impossible by reason. Between the unusual and the impossible. Between the remotely possible and the utterly unattainable.

And some people let doubt creep into their hearts because they do not grasp this difference; they consider what is impossible by habit as though it were impossible by reason; this is a significant mistake. You find that they doubt some matters of the unseen because their minds find them far-fetched due to unfamiliarity; even though they are possible by reason and do not contradict any rational principle.

We have seen in this life things that were deemed completely unlikely in the past; yet today, they are taken for granted!

Take for example: Hearing someone's voice at the moment they speak while they are thousands of miles away, or even seeing their image: who would have believed this 150 years ago?! And who denies this today?!

**Fifteenth**: Prevention before treatment.

Stay away from the triggers of doubts and the causes of skepticism; for treatment usually does not work unless accompanied by prevention from the causes of the illness.

*They saw a thousand builders not undone by a single destroyer—*

*So how about a builder followed by a thousand more disrupters!*

You are your own doctor, and you know where your doubts come from, so close the windows!

**Sixteenth**: Do not be concerned with those who oppose the manifest truth.

Do not say: If it were true, it would have no opponents.

Some people waver when they see someone opposing what they believe, few or many; and this is not considered by the wise; for the truth is known by its evidence, not by those who agree or disagree.

So, take it easy on yourself if you see someone opposing what you believe; for among people are those who deny tangible realities! And among them are those who deny all sciences! And among them are those who worship Satan, and those who worship monkeys and rats!

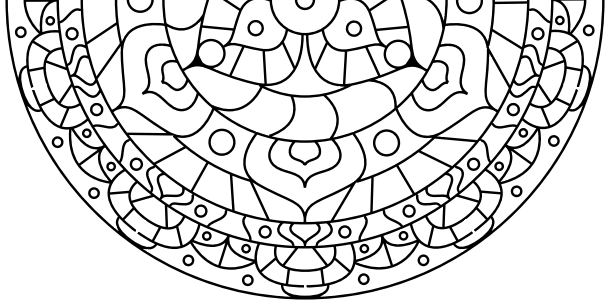
These are brief pieces of advice, and may Allah make them beneficial.

In conclusion...

Certainty is among the greatest gifts from the Generous One, Exalted be He; so be among the grateful, and ask for steadfastness upon it.

*For further benefit*

I recommend reading about the station of certainty from the book "Madarij al-Salikin" by Ibn Qayyim (3/170), published by Dar Alam al-Fawaid, for his words, may Allah have mercy on him, are exceedingly beautiful.



# Chapter Fifteen: I Supplicated, Yet My Supplication Was Not Answered!

Supplication is a rope stretched between the heavens and the earth, a connection between Allah and His servants. Through it, the welfare of their religion and worldly life is attained. They turn to it to fulfill their needs and alleviate their distresses, and there is nothing more honorable to Allah than it.

By making sincere supplications to Allah, the realization of monotheism in its forms is achieved, for it is truly an act of worship; it signifies the servant's glorification of the Worshipped, their good opinion of Him, and for this reason, the Prophet ﷺ confined worship to it, saying: "Supplication is the essence of worship," and he recited this verse: {And your Lord says, "Call upon Me; I will respond to you."} *[Ghafir: 60]* Reported by Ahmad (18386).

Allah, exalted be He, urges His servants to supplicate to Him, and indeed, He becomes angry with those who refrain from it. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever does not ask Allah, Allah will be angry with him" Reported by Ahmad (9701).

Ataa said: Tawus -may Allah have mercy on them both- came to me and said: "O Ataa, beware of raising your needs to the one who has closed his door to you, placed a veil before you, and seek your needs from the One whose door is open to you until the Day of Resurrection. He has asked you to call upon Him and promised you a response." Reported by Abu Nuaim in Al-Hilya (4/11).

Indeed, supplication is the best weapon with which a believer arms themselves and wards off calamity; it is their equipment and arsenal, and the most helpless of people are those who are helpless in supplication. The Prophet ﷺ said: "The most miserly of people are those who are miserly with greetings, and the most helpless of people are those who are helpless in supplication" Reported by Ibn Hibban (6097).

Supplication is profit without toil, gain without pain, and a lucrative trade available to both the poor and the wealthy.

Supplication is one of the greatest causes of happiness in this life and the hereafter.

## Etiquettes of Supplication

There are many etiquettes of supplication that a servant must uphold, some obligatory and some recommended. These are among the greatest causes for the acceptance of supplications. The most important ones are summarized as follows:

The foremost and most crucial: that the servant asks Allah alone.

***Direct your plea to the Divine, for indeed.***

***In the bounty of our Lord, we find our turn.***

And beware of calling upon anyone besides Him; it is destruction and loss, {And whoever invokes besides Allah another deity for

which he has no proof - then his account is only with his Lord. Indeed, the disbelievers will not succeed} *[Al-Mu'minun: 117]*.

***Invoking the dead nullifies deeds,***

***and strips away faith, woe to whoever does it.***

**Among the etiquettes**: that the supplicant begins their supplication by praising Allah and showing neediness towards Him, and to send blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ and to lower one's voice in supplication, between whispering and speaking aloud: {Call upon your Lord in humility and privately. Indeed, He does not like transgressors} *[Al-A'raf: 55]*. Ibn Juraij said: "Disliked is raising one's voice, calling out loud, and shouting in supplication, and commanded is to supplicate with humility and submission."

It is also good for the supplicant to seek means of nearness to their Lord through the lawful types of Tawassul, to seek the times of acceptance as much as possible, to raise their hands, to be firm in their supplication and assertive, as the Prophet ﷺ said: "Let not any of you say: 'O Allah, forgive me if You will; have mercy on me if You will.' Let him be firm in asking, for Allah does as He wishes, and there is no compulsion upon Him." Agreed upon (Bukhari: 6339, Muslim: 2679).

And let the heart be present during supplication, certain of a response from their Lord, as the Prophet ﷺ said: "Call upon Allah while being certain of the response, and know that Allah does not respond to a supplication from the heart of one heedless and distracted." Reported by Tirmidhi (3479).

And whoever wants their supplication to be answered should avoid consuming, drinking, and wearing the unlawful.

**Among the etiquettes**: to abundantly supplicate in times of ease and hardship, for the Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever wishes that Allah

should respond to him during hardship and grief, let him increase in supplication in times of ease." Reported by Tirmidhi (3382).

**And among the etiquettes**: to insistently plead with their Lord in their supplication, Imam Al-Awza'i said: "It was said: The best supplication is persistence in pleading to Allah and humbling oneself to Him."

And to beware of hastening the response; for the Prophet ﷺ said: "The supplication of one of you is answered as long as he is not hasty, saying: 'I have supplicated, and I was not answered.'" Agreed upon (Bukhari: 6340, Muslim: 2735).

**Finally**: to avoid transgression in supplication, which is to exceed the limits in meaning, wording, or manner and posture.

## The Answering of Supplications as Evidence of Allah's Existence and Lordship

Scholars say: Among the proofs of Allah's existence, His Lordship, and His Oneness, and His attributes of majesty and perfection, is always His answering of supplications. Creation cannot enumerate what He, Exalted be He, grants the supplicants, and what He responds to the righteous and the sinner, the Muslim and the disbeliever.

How many persons throughout history raised their hands to the heavens, called upon Allah, and achieved their request? This is something I know personally, you know in yourself, and people recognize in themselves. And for those who do not recall anything of this: the widespread reports from millions of humans who called upon Allah and were answered are sufficient.

Both ancient and modern history are replete with stories about righteous people known for their prayers being answered, not

to mention what is mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah about Allah's response to the supplications of His prophets.

These are widely transmitted reports, and only a troublemaker who plays with facts would deny them.

In summary: Many desires are fulfilled for people in both ancient and modern times, and they know no cause for it other than supplication and hoping in the bounty of the Giver. This is always a witnessed proof, denied only by a defiant denier.

Therefore, there is a capable, merciful Lord who heard the supplication and responded.

Indeed, the mere act of humans turning to the Creator, Exalted be He, in supplication during times of hardship - a practice they invariably engage in - is sufficient to prove the existence of the One, the Lord of the Universe, to whom people are naturally inclined.

## Discussing The Atheists' Argument That Unanswered Supplications Negate Allah's Existence

Some people face a problem related to this topic, often asking about it; they say: I prayed, but my prayer was not answered!

Enemies of Allah might use this issue as a doubt to shake the faith of the ignorant in their Lord; they say: So-and-so called upon Allah and did not find a response; if Allah existed, He would have answered; therefore, He does not exist! Exalted is Allah above what they describe.

Before answering, I present six introductory points that will facilitate a correct understanding of the topic by Allah's will; keep them in mind as you read the following responses:

**First**: Allah, the Exalted, is wise, undoubtedly characterized by wisdom, and wisdom is placing things in their most rightful and perfect places.

His attribute of wisdom is a definitive matter, supported by thousands of pieces of evidence. So, the hastening, delaying, or replacing of what is requested with something better, all return to the wisdom of the Wise, the All-Aware, Exalted be He.

**Second**: Allah is the most truthful of speakers, {And who is more truthful than Allah in statement} *[Al-Nisa: 122]*, and when He, Exalted be He, promises, He does not break His promise; so, let not your faith waver in this.

**Third**: If some evidence comes in an absolute form and some in a restricted form, it is obligatory to interpret the absolute evidence considering the restricted ones.

**Fourth**: It is necessary to believe both in Allah's forgiveness and mercy and in His severe punishment. He said: {Inform My servants that it is I who am the Forgiving, the Merciful, and that My punishment is the painful punishment} *[Al-Hijr: 49 - 50]*.

**Fifth**: Our knowledge is limited, and our minds are weak, not comprehending everything, while Allah, the Exalted, has comprehensive knowledge of everything, {And Allah knows, and you do not know} *[Al-Nur: 19]*.

**Sixth**: The world is a place of trial, not a place of ultimate joy. The world is not Paradise, and the Hereafter is where the fullest reward is given.

These six introductory points are important, and hopefully, if combined with the following answers, the matter will become clear, and the problem resolved by Allah's will.

**Firstly**: This doubt is refuted by the fact that Allah has answered many supplications; as previously mentioned, in both ancient and modern times, in incidents too numerous to be considered widespread.

Therefore, to the one who says: I prayed but did not find an answer; it can be said to him: I and many others, many, many others: prayed and found the response! And the one who affirms is given precedence over the one who denies.

And the truth of the Prophet of Allah, Zakariya ﷺ is evident when he said: {And I have never been in prayer to You, my Lord, unhappy} *[Maryam: 4]*, meaning, "I have never experienced from You anything but response to supplication, and You have never turned me away in anything I asked You for." (Tafsir Ibn Kathir 5/212).

And let me remind you, the one raising the issue, and remind myself of many supplications we made and were answered; how many exams we entered, prayed to Allah for success and succeeded, how many travels or departures from our homes we prayed for safety and returned safely, how many transactions we asked for facilitation and they were facilitated for us, how many times we were ill and prayed for healing and were healed, how many times we prayed to reach Ramadan and we reached it...

Many situations, forgotten! And remembering only those prayers that were not specifically realized for us, and Allah's truth in describing those who do not appreciate Him properly: {And when adversity touches you at sea, lost are those you invoke except for Him. But when He saves you to the land, you turn away *[from Him]*. And man is ever ungrateful} *[Al-Isra: 67]*.

**Secondly**: A servant humbled before his Lord does not speak these words; for the supplication that is answered is from a servant to his Lord, not from one arrogant towards Him, who says, in

essence or in consequence, "Either give me everything I want, or I deny Your existence!" Or "Either give me now without delay; otherwise, I doubt Your power and mercy!" This is not appropriate to treat even a human like you, such as a father, mother, or official; so how about your great Lord, Exalted be He?!

The discussion on this topic should begin first by defining the relationship between the servant and his Lord; what is it? Is it a relationship of servitude and submission, from a servant to his Lord whom he loves and fears His punishment and hopes for His mercy, to his Lord whom he believes to be perfect in names and attributes, who has vast knowledge and profound wisdom, complete richness, and total power, to his Lord whom he hopes will graciously answer him, without compulsion or overcoming Him?

Or is it a relationship of transaction and "interests," as they say?!

Whoever understands the correct position here will find it easy to grasp the entire topic; otherwise, he should first correct his belief before discussing the subject of supplication.

Meaning: When someone says: I prayed but was not answered; we ask him: What does the answer to supplication mean to you? Is it a transaction; "I prayed, so where is the answer; why did it delay on me!" As if you gave something and now you want to take, and you have a right over Allah that you want to extract?! It's not like that; the correct concept of answer is that Allah, the Exalted, graciously answers the supplication of the supplicant, by His will coupled with His wisdom.

Here we have three things:

1. Allah answers the supplication of the needy supplicant, not the arrogant or the doubter, or the one who wants to test His existence, or His power or His richness; for Allah is too exalted

to answer this; He said: {Call upon your Lord in humility and in private. Indeed, He does not like transgressors. Do not corrupt the earth after its reformation and call upon Him in fear and aspiration. Indeed, Allah's mercy is near to the doers of good} *[Al-A'raf: 56 - 55]*.

2. Allah answers by His will, not by someone's coercion or obligation, far exalted is He above this, He said: {But it is He you call upon, and He can remove what you call upon Him for if He wills} *[Al-An'am: 41]*.

3. Allah answers with His wisdom, not aimlessly; and His wisdom may require delaying the granting of the requested or providing something instead, as will be discussed.

**Thirdly**: The answer to supplication is evidence of the existence of Allah, Exalted be He, not a test of His existence!

For Allah is the One who tests His servants and examines them, not the other way around! This is an inversion and distortion of the truth.

I return to say: The answer to supplication is evidence of His existence and not being answered is not evidence of His non-existence; because evidence does not invert; the absence of it does not necessitate the absence of what it indicates; because it may be proven by another evidence; and we have thousands of pieces of evidence on His existence, Exalted be He, and His Lordship.

Also, not being answered has many reasonable explanations; so, making not being answered evidence of atheism is a ridiculous fallacy and a refuted argument.

**Fourthly**: Whoever denies the existence of his Lord based on not receiving what he asked for does not want a noble and capable Lord, characterized by dignity, will, and majesty; rather, he wants

a servant for himself, commanded, whose job is to fulfill his requests and execute his wishes, or he wants Him to be a "robot" programmed to execute everything asked of him! And our Lord is exalted and sanctified above this.

**Fifthly**: Not granting a person his request may be an act of mercy from Allah; for out of His mercy, He may withhold from His servant what he asks for, knowing that it harms him, He said: {And man supplicates for evil as he supplicates for good, and man is ever hasty} *[Al-Isra: 11]*. And this refers to a man who prays against himself and his family in anger.

And how many pray to Allah in times of weakness, anger, or ignorance for things that, if answered, would return to harm them. Muslim reported in his Sahih (2688) from Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ visited a man from the Muslims who had become as thin as a chick, so he said to him: "Did you supplicate for anything or ask Him for it?" He said: "Yes, I used to say: 'O Allah, whatever punishment You would punish me with in the Hereafter, hasten it for me in this world.' So, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "'Subhan Allah, you cannot bear that - or you are not capable of it - Why did you not say: 'O Allah, grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and save us from the punishment of the Fire?'" So, he prayed to Allah for him, and he was healed.

Therefore, not every answer to a request is mercy; rather, the answer may be a calamity, and we, due to our limited intellects and delusion, think that we have encompassed knowledge of everything, and know what is completely better for us, so we get upset when our request is not fulfilled!

See the case of a sick child who asks his father for food or drink he desires, but it harms him and increases his illness, so refusal to

answer here is mercy, and the child's anger after refusal is due to his lack of understanding, and how similar we are in many cases to that child!

The lesson here: How limited our intellects are in understanding the consequences of matters, and how subsequent truths reveal our ignorance in estimation, and our poor choice; so, let us entrust our matters to the All-Knowing, the Most Merciful:

***Entrust the matter to Him.***

***He is more concerned for you than you are.***

In summary: From Allah's mercy is that He may not answer a supplication knowing that it would return to harm the supplicant, He said: {And it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. And Allah knows, and you know not} *[Al-Baqarah: 216]*.

**Sixthly**: Not granting a person his request may be an effect of Allah's attributes of dignity and anger; perhaps withholding something you love is because you openly disobey Allah, and arrogantly avoid obedience; thus, you are punished by being deprived of what you love.

Before you think ill of your Lord: review yourself; perhaps the reason for not being answered is what your hands have wrought, and who among us can claim purity!

And this has another aspect of mercy towards you; the delay in obtaining what you supplicated for calls you to search yourself and review it and repent to Allah for what you have committed.

**Seventhly**: Not granting a person his request may be an effect of Allah's wisdom, perhaps the answer contradicts wisdom, and wisdom lies in the prevention, {And if the truth had followed their

desires, the heavens and the earth and whoever is in them would have been corrupted} *[Al-Mu'minun: 71]*. And Allah knows best the interests of His servants in this world; {And Allah knows, and you do not know} *[Al-Nur: 19]*. Thus, He did not respond to the supplication of His prophet Noah - although he was beloved to Him - when he called upon Him and said: {My Lord, indeed my son is of my family, and indeed, Your promise is true, and You are the most just of judges} *[Hud: 45]*. And He did not respond to His beloved servant Abraham, peace be upon him, when he said: {And of my descendants? *[Allah said:]* My covenant does not include the wrongdoers} *[Al-Baqarah: 124]*. And He did not respond to His beloved servant Muhammad ﷺ when he said: "I asked my Lord for three things, He gave me two and withheld one. I asked my Lord not to destroy my nation with famine, and He gave it to me. And I asked Him not to destroy my nation with drowning, and He gave it to me. And I asked Him not to let their own violence be the cause of their destruction, but He withheld it from me." Reported by Muslim (2890).

Therefore, it might be that Divine wisdom require withholding the requested or delaying the answer.

**Eighthly**: Not answering supplication cannot be evidence of the non-existence of the invoked, let alone contradict the definitive proofs of His existence; for Allah, the Exalted, has established His existence and greatness with many definitive evidences, and the fact that He did not answer someone who called upon Him, to the rational, is due to His not wanting to, not due to His non-existence.

To clarify this with an example: If you are certain that someone is sitting behind a wall because you heard his voice, then you called him, and he did not respond: it is not rational to say he does not exist, rather, he does not want to respond, and why did

he not respond? This is another discussion related to wisdom, not existence.

Similarly, here: Allah exists, but He did not grant your request because this is His will coupled with His wisdom, and we may understand the wisdom, or we may not.

**Ninthly**: Be assured: the answer to supplication, fulfilling its conditions, is guaranteed to happen; {And when My servants ask you concerning Me, indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me} *[Al-Baqarah: 186]*, but it does not necessarily mean granting the requested; for the answer is broader than granting the requested; it could be with it or something else.

Meaning: Every supplicant who fulfills the conditions for the acceptance of supplication and avoids its impediments is answered, but the answer varies:

- Sometimes by granting that for which was supplicated.
- Sometimes by granting its substitute, which is more beneficial for the supplicant; by reserving for him a reward in the Hereafter.
- Sometimes by repelling a worldly calamity due to his supplication.

And this returns to the wisdom of the Wisest of judges, Exalted be He.

And this is what is mentioned in the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: "There is no Muslim who supplicates with a supplication that does not involve sin or cutting off family ties, except that Allah will give him one of three things: He will either hasten his supplication, or He will save it for him in the Hereafter, or He will divert an evil equal to it from him. They said: Then we will ask for more. He said: Allah is more *[generous]*." Reported by Ahmad (11133).

And with this, the problem is completely removed; for supplication is a beneficial act of worship, undoubtedly, and the answer is assuredly obtained, and the supplicant benefits from his supplication without a doubt.

**Tenthly**: The realization of the answer to supplication has conditions and impediments; when the conditions are met and the impediments are avoided, the servant can rejoice in the answer.

Therefore, if someone prays and the realization of what he requests is delayed, he should ask himself: Have I fulfilled the conditions for the answer, and avoided its impediments? And I advise him, when answering himself, to put aside arrogance, and respond with sincerity and honesty.

How often we pray and feel the answer is delayed; and when we look deeply into our circumstances, it is revealed to us that the fault lies within us! And Allah is the one whose help is sought.

**Eleventhly**: Someone might say: What you said is true; perhaps we pray while there is something within us; but what about the supplications made by righteous, oppressed individuals for the lifting of oppression from them and the relief of their distress, and yet the answer is delayed; isn't lifting the oppression from the oppressed always better? So why hasn't the answer come?

And the answer: Yes, this is better, without a doubt, but: it is not necessarily the best of the two goods! And this is a critical issue, so pay attention to it!

The matter may fluctuate between good and good; here, the wisdom is to achieve the greater of the two goods, and this is something rational people do not dispute; therefore, the oppressed might be compensated for his supplication and his patience on his affliction by expiating sins and a great reward in Paradise and

high ranks in it, and this is more beneficial for him than lifting the oppression; and consider this in the story from the prophetic era; as in both Sahih collections (Bukhari: 5652, Muslim: 2576), a woman came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "I get seizures, and I get exposed, so pray to Allah for me *[i.e., that He cures me from this affliction]*), so the Prophet ﷺ said: "If you wish, be patient, and for you is Paradise, and if you wish, I will pray to Allah to heal you." She said: "I will be patient", then she said: "I get exposed, so pray to Allah for me not to get exposed, so he prayed for her". So, note here that entering Paradise was what was best for her.

**Twelfthly, and finally**: If an atheist raises this doubt, know that he is definitely a manipulator and not a seeker of truth; because if the answer is delayed, he denies His existence, Exalted be He, and if what was called for happens, he will immediately say: This happened by chance! So, he is a denier in any case, so let the Muslim beware of his deception.

## Advice for Muslims When Their Prayers Are Delayed in Being Answered

These are five brief pieces of advice:

**The first:** The Muslim must magnify Allah in his heart; for this is the basis of everything, relied upon, and from where it begins, for Allah is capable of everything, nothing is impossible for Him, and if He willed to grant your request, even to reach your utmost wishes in the blink of an eye: He would do it, and that is easy for Allah; but He has profound wisdom.

**The second**: Trust in your Lord and His wisdom, rely on Him, entrust the matter to Him, and think well of Him, {And who is better in judgment than Allah for a people who have certainty *[in their faith]*} *[Al-Ma'idah: 50]*.

**The third**: Do not despair or lose hope, repeat the supplication and do not be lazy, and rejoice in a near relief.

O you who lie awake at night, sorrowful at its start...

Know that glad tidings may knock at dawn's door.

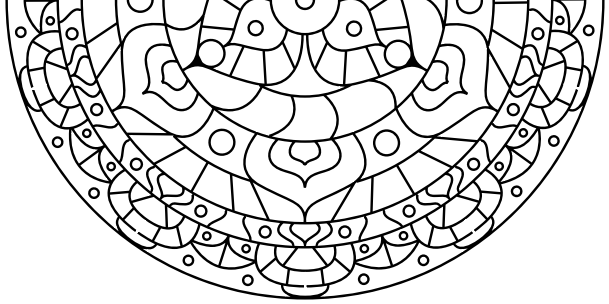
**The fourth**: Remember: {And the Hereafter is better for you than the first *[life]*} *[Al-Duha: 4]*. {And what is with Allah is better and more lasting} *[Al-Qasas: 60]*. Always keep these two verses before your eyes.

**The fifth**: Search within yourself, correct what is corrupted, renew repentance, and increase in seeking forgiveness.

And Allah, the Exalted, knows best.

## *For further benefit*

I recommend following the supplications of the prophets in the Noble Qur'an, reflect on their meaning, structure, and etiquette, and you will find that a door of knowledge and faith will be opened to you, and accustom your tongue to weave in their manner.



# Chapter Sixteen: Freedom Between Absoluteness and Restriction

The contemporary concept of freedom is a significant source of debate, due to differing understandings and applications among people. Undeniably, this word has always been cherished by the soul and welcomed with eagerness, as evident in the rich Arabic literary tradition.

However, the situation has shifted in this era, as freedom has become one of the most problematic terms. It has various definitions, is used to justify both rights and wrongs, and is spoken of by both the truthful and the heretic. Thus, it urgently needs to be scrutinized, to define its boundaries, and to distinguish its correct use from its misuse. This is because everyone interprets freedom according to their desires, so much so that even the insolent consider their impudence a form of freedom, the extravagant include their excessiveness under freedom, and the deviant describe their deviance as freedom, and so forth.

This title has thus suffered from misuse, distortion, and frivolity to the extent that it has become a docile vehicle for rebellion,

a bridge for crossing over values, and a means to dismantle the pillars of virtue.

This does not mean that freedom is entirely rejected; rather, what is rejected is the false notion of freedom or its misuse, which is unfortunately widespread.

To clarify, there are two methodologies in defining the essence of freedom and its boundaries:

1. A moderate, beneficial freedom, established by Islam with its justice, mercy, and wisdom.

2. A false, rebellious freedom, pursued by those who rebel against the law of Allah, regardless of their sects, and those who follow their lead.

Further explanation of these concepts will follow, by the will of Allah.

## The Correct Approach to Dealing with Attractive Terms

A wise Muslim should not hastily respond to terms not found in the Quran or Sunnah, whether in acceptance or rejection, especially those with vague, nebulous meanings or those that change over time. Instead, one should be cautious and weigh these terms against the Shariah to accept or reject them in its light.

***And Shariah, the balance of all affairs it holds,***

***A witness to its branches and roots, it upholds.***

Today, there is a raging global conflict of terms and slogans. Often, corrupt concepts are promoted under the guise of beautiful terms and shiny slogans. Decorated words that sound sweet but beneath them lies deadly poison!

It's no coincidence that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ feared for his Ummah those who manipulate words to promote falsehood. In the Musnad of Imam Ahmed (143), it's reported, "What I fear most for my Ummah is every hypocrite with an articulate tongue."

Reality shows that some hypocrites and proponents of evil only need to choose their words carefully and play with terms to make the masses accept the ugliest of ideas, whether extremism or degeneracy.

Surprisingly, it's often the words whose meanings are hard to pin down precisely - such as "freedom" - that have the most significant impact on people, sometimes requiring extensive argumentation and effort to counteract their influence.

## Definition of Freedom

There isn't a single, universally agreed-upon definition of freedom; rather, its concept varies with cultures, desires, and motivations. Much of the conflict between good and evil, justice and transgression, essentially comes down to differing standards of freedom.

Freedom is a term used in various fields, approached by specialists in diverse areas such as jurisprudence, philosophy, law, politics, psychology, sociology, and more.

Modern philosophical dictionaries offer general definitions of freedom, such as "the ability to carry out or refrain from an action without subjection to external pressure."

Or they say, "It is the individual's independence in his actions, free from any authority."

In short, away from the complexities of terminology, the contemporary meaning of freedom can be summarized in a simple phrase: the liberation of will in making choices.

Note that this brief phrase might need volumes to explain and clarify it across different fields.

In essence, while we might find similar theoretical definitions of freedom, precisely controlling it or determining what falls under it practically is where people significantly differ.

## Does the Term "Freedom" Appear in the Qur'an and Hadith?

This term does not appear in the Qur'an or the Hadith in the contemporary sense mentioned earlier. However, freedom as opposed to slavery is mentioned, which is a different context not intended in the contemporary uses of the term. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the meanings encompassed by this term; what aligns with correctness should be accepted, and what is false should be rejected, as will be discussed, by the will of Allah.

## The False Notion of Freedom and Its Characteristics

False freedom is absolute freedom without any restraint... to do anything without being constrained by anything! This is the type of freedom that is promoted in the West today. This extreme, false freedom is characterized by three key features:

1. It advocates for selfishness—what is called today "individualism." The absolute priority in this type of freedom is for the individual, for his desires and his benefit, not for the welfare of society.
2. It does not allow for any oversight or accountability over the individual, no commands, and no prohibitions.

3. It lacks a stable standard for truth and falsehood, or a balance for good and evil, or a regulator for high and low values.

As a result, it is a detached freedom that has eliminated all restraints and indeed all values! The greatest value it has abolished is the true religion, so under the shade of this freedom, there is no difference between worshipping the merciful Allah and worshipping stones, cows, or Satan! As for ethics among these liberated people, it has no standard other than pleasure, benefit, and desire.

This freedom has unleashed desires, so in its name, a person can engage in all forms of deviance and all kinds of indecency, and can publicly hold any opinion, even if it contradicts religious laws, morals, or societal norms.

It is indeed a false freedom! Its beginning might be dazzling, and it might offer some pleasure, but its end is corruption and loss. Truly, it is a loss... What else has this freedom brought to those who embrace it? Has it brought them true happiness? The answer is no! Instead, it has brought them misery and distress, which they escape from by any means possible. Life has become so cheap to them that some might commit suicide over the loss of a lover or the defeat of a sports team!

What is the value of this freedom that hasn't benefited them in the slightest? What value does a freedom have in which a person cannot control an instinct or restrain an impulse? What kind of bondage is more humiliating than this?

What is truly regrettable is that the concepts of this freedom have invaded our societies, causing the youth of Muslims to grow up isolated from their religion and history. They want Muslim girls and boys to be "free," even if it means drilling a hole in the ship to sink it and drown!

Freedom drowns them first in the waves of desires under the guise of "personal freedom." Then it drowns them in the depths of doubt under the guise of "freedom of thought." Then it casts them onto the shore of rebellion against their religion and society under the guise of "freedom of opinion." Finally, it plunges them into a deep valley of atheism and apostasy under the guise of "freedom of belief."

This is the ugly face of freedom: its appearance is mercy, but its essence is torment. Its slogan is openness, but it is heavy chains; for under its banner, a person becomes a slave to pleasure, driven by desire, and controlled by whims. The person becomes like a weak branch; swayed by any passing breeze. Sometimes love tilts it, sometimes ambition pulls it, and sometimes it becomes enslaved to money and wealth, until it takes its whims as its god and follows them without guidance from Allah unless He bestows His mercy upon them.

These people have been blinded and deafened to the fact that a person is a servant, whether they like it or not! One cannot escape servitude at all; one is either a servant of Allah, freeing oneself from the servitude of anything else, or a servant of desires, fame, or wealth, perhaps even a servant to one's own clothing! As mentioned in Bukhari (2887), the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Wretched is the slave of the dinar, the dirham, the quilted cloak, and the fine linen."

The Conclusion: The ugly face of freedom reveals itself when its meaning, whether theoretically or practically, becomes independence from the true religion of Allah; here, it will be the worst of matters.

## Freedom in the Shade of Islam

I've previously mentioned that this term, in its contemporary sense, is not found in the Quran or the Hadith. However, Islam brings forth meanings that can be considered part of the correct concept of freedom, summarized in five points:

1. Freedom as opposed to slavery – as previously mentioned – is the natural state of people, with slavery being an exceptional state with its specific jurisprudential rulings.
2. Freedom meaning the honor of the self, nobility of character, and gallantry of spirit, whereby a person breaks the stick of obedience to falsehood, submission to oppression, and trivial matters. This was celebrated in pre-Islamic Arab poetry, seen as encompassing all noble virtues. To them, a free person was one of noble character, as stated in the Arabic Lamiyat:

***But a free spirit within me does not linger.***

***On blame, but for a moment, until I transform.***

Islam has affirmed and reinforced this notion of freedom.

3. The establishment of will and choice for the servant, acting by their will, and bearing the responsibility for their choices.
4. The permissibility of enjoying lawful pleasures under Sharia, as Allah states: {Say, "Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has produced for His servants and the good lawful things of provision?" Say, "They are for those who believe during the worldly life, *[but]* exclusively for them on the Day of Resurrection"} *[Al-A'raf: 32]*.
5. Liberation from false beliefs and attachment to created beings.

Thus, Islam introduced enlightened, genuine, and joyous freedom, where human happiness is not found in the freedom of

animals but in the freedom regulated by Islamic principles and shaded by its guidance.

**Here are ten aspects highlighting its features:**

1. The most important and primary freedom Islam calls for is the liberation of the heart from attachment to creation and freeing belief from superstitions, desires, and blind imitation, dedicating the heart and limbs to Allah.

2. Islam declares freedom a right and necessity for humans; they perform honorable deeds by choice and are rewarded, and they commit wrongs by choice and face consequences. Thus, it is the basis of accountability, as Allah says: {And *[by]* the soul and He who proportioned it. And inspired it *[with discernment of]* its wickedness and its righteousness, He has succeeded who purifies it, and he has failed who instills it *[with corruption]*} *[Al-Shams: 10 - 7]*.

3. The essence of freedom in Islam is knowing what is due and what is owed, adhering to the rules of fairness, and submitting to the truth. "The truth is more deserving to be followed, wherever it is found."

4. In our religion, freedom means the ability to choose without causing harm or harm to others. Note that both aspects must be considered, not harming oneself or others. This unrestrained freedom mentioned earlier comes with only one aspect, saying, "Do not harm others, but as for yourself, do whatever you wish." Which approach is wiser and more merciful?

5. Our Sharia balances between freedom and responsibility. As much as freedom is your right, responsibility - towards yourself, your religion, and others - is obligatory on you. If you wish to exercise a right, you must fulfill a duty.

The precise definition of true freedom is clear in all Islamic teachings: to take one's rights and fulfill others' rights.

6. Islam clarifies the difference between "doing as one pleases" and "doing what is right," with the latter being correct, not the former.

7. Islam illustrates a vast distance between freedom and chaos. If rational people agree that freedom cannot exist without order, Islam came to regulate it with restrictions that establish justice and prevent injustice to oneself and others. Therefore, freedom under Islam is restricted, not absolute, disciplined, restrained.

8. Islam states:

- Without justice, freedom will fall to the lowest depths.
- Freedom and noble morals must be bound together and inseparable.
- Impudence and freedom are opposites, not synonyms.
- Attacking the sanctities of Allah, harming Muslims in their religion, their book, and their Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is not part of freedom; rather, it's a declaration of enmity towards Muslims, violating all standards of justice and ethics among all sane people. Consequently:
- Preventing someone from harming another is not a violation of freedom.
- Preventing someone from violating the sanctity and security of Muslims is not a violation of freedom.
- Deterring someone from violating the sanctity of Islam is not a violation of freedom.
- Advising, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong, in a lawful manner, is not a violation of freedom.

9. Islamic rulings call upon the Muslim: You are free in your speech, thoughts, and earnings as long as your freedom does not oppose the religion, threaten the safety of society and undermine its foundations, neglect a more significant right, and as long as it does not lead to harming oneself or others. You are free if you do not exceed the limits set by Allah, follow your desires, or wrong others or infringe on their rights.
10. From Islamic rulings and evidence, freedom is a reality, not an objective. Whoever follows Islamic teachings will be free, enjoying true freedom and savoring its fragrance. The goal, however, is servitude to Allah! This is the purpose of your existence, and striving for it should be your primary concern in this life. The extent to which you achieve this determines your share of freedom.

It's unfortunate that when a Muslim man or woman is advised to do what is obligatory and to avoid what is prohibited, they coldly reply, "I am free!" How foolish this statement is in such a context!

Who told you that you have the freedom to rebel?

Who told you that freedom means transgressing Allah's limits?

Who gave you the right to use freedom as a weapon against those who advise you?

You are a servant of Allah, bound to obey Him, and you cannot escape this.

It's astonishing how a Muslim allows themselves to say this while believing that they will face accountability and recompense from Allah tomorrow, and Allah is the Helper.

**In summary, true freedom lies in servitude, nothing else.**

The correct understanding of Allah's saying: {So whoever wills, let him believe; and whoever wills, let him disbelieve} *[Al-Kahf: 29]*, and His saying: {There is no compulsion in religion} *[Al-Baqarah: 256]*, and His saying: {To you be your religion, and to me my religion} *[Al-Kafirun: 6]*.

Some people claim that human freedom is guaranteed to the extent that one is free to believe as one wishes; to adopt any religion that pleases them, to enter any religion they desire, and to leave any religion they wish. This, they argue, applies equally to Islam and other false religions!

These individuals attribute this false concept of belief freedom to Islam, clinging to certain aspects of the Shariah they do not understand correctly.

On contemplation, one finds that many of these people are psychologically defeated, hence they subject Islam to Western thought, demanding it to dissolve into it, erasing the Muslim identity, and the distinctive features of Islam.

They want it to merely reflect others, and for Muslims to beautify Islam in the eyes of the West and the East, even at the expense of transgressing its boundaries and distorting its concepts!

Such people have gravely erred. Islam is the true religion revealed by Allah, supreme over others, with its purposes, wisdom, and rulings. It is not required to conform to other religions or societal norms.

Whoever believes in all its rulings will find happiness in this life and the Hereafter, and those who disbelieve will not harm but themselves, nor will they harm Islam in the slightest. {And let

not those who hasten into disbelief grieve you; they will not harm Allah at all. Allah intends that He should give them no share in the Hereafter, and for them, there is a great punishment} *[Ali 'Imran: 176]*.

Undoubtedly, anyone who truly understands Islam will assert that this purported freedom is one of the clearest forms of falsehood and greatest shadows; for all evidence in Shariah and the consensus of all Muslims have established that the only true religion acceptable to Allah post the prophethood of Muhammad is Islam. {And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter, he will be one of the losers}. {Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam} *[Ali 'Imran: 85]*.

The individual does not have the option to enter, neglect, or leave it but is bound to adhere to it, under threat of eternal damnation for turning away, as Allah says: {And whoever does not believe in Allah and His Messenger then indeed, We have prepared for the disbelievers a Blaze} *[Al-Fath: 13]*.

Regarding their misinterpretation of Allah's saying: {So whoever wills let him believe; and whoever wills, let him disbelieve} *[Al-Kahf: 29]*, it is a mistaken interpretation. The verse is not providing a choice between belief and disbelief but is a form of threat and warning. It's a known Arabic rhetorical method, and the evidence that it's a threat is found in Allah's saying right after: {Indeed, We have prepared for the wrongdoers a fire that has surrounded them with its walls} *[Al-Kahf: 29]*. Thus, it's a warning and threat to those who choose disbelief after receiving the warning. It also demonstrates Allah's sufficiency, meaning: This is the truth from your Lord; if you believe, you do not benefit Allah with your belief, and if you disbelieve, you do not harm Him with your disbelief. Hence, this verse does not support their claim.

Regarding Allah's saying: {There is no compulsion in religion} *[Al-Kahf: 256]*, unfortunately, this verse's meaning is often distorted. The "no" in this verse can signify negation or prohibition.

If it indicates negation, then the verse informs from Allah that you cannot compel anyone into the religion because the beneficial religion is based on what's in the heart, and there's no way to coerce belief.

If it signifies prohibition, then it means no one should be forced to enter Islam from those who pay the Jizya if they offer it, noting this does not benefit them before Allah; if they die upon anything other than Islam, they are of the Hellfire dwellers and cursed by the Almighty.

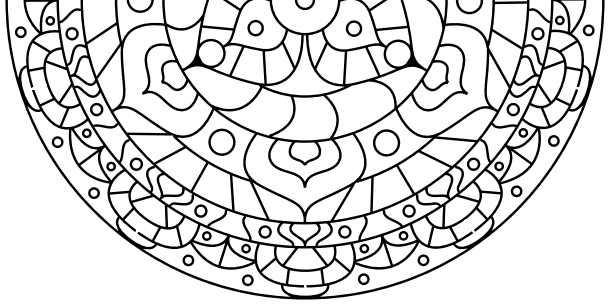
Thus, compulsion in this verse refers to entering the religion, not leaving it.

Regarding His saying: {To you be your religion, and to me my religion} *[Al-Kafirun: 6]*, this verse is about disavowal, not approval: a disavowal from the disbelievers and their religion, and the entire chapter is with this meaning, not in confirming them on their religion. It named them disbelievers *[Say: Oh disbelievers!] [Al-Kafirun: 1]*, then announced disavowal from them and their religion as if saying: "I do not worship what you worship because it is a false worship". And after that, if you insist on this: "To you be your religion, and to me my religion".

It's like the command from Allah to His Prophet to say: {You are disavowed of what I do, and I am disavowed of what you do} *[Yunus: 41]*, similar to Hud's statement, peace be upon him and our Prophet, {I bear witness to Allah, and witness that I am free from what you associate with Him besides Allah} *[Hud" 54 - 55]*. Allah knows best.

*For further benefit*

I recommend reading the book "Al-Ubudiyyah" (Servitude) by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, for it is extremely valuable. If it were appropriate for me to rename it, I would call it "The Book of Freedom."



# Chapter Seventeen: The Chaos of Reading and Reception

We are living through a complex issue in this era, evident to anyone aware of reality. There is significant intellectual chaos today, caused by major global transformations, including this knowledge explosion - or rather, eruption. This has led many young men and women into major problems concerning their belief and religion, resulting in deviations towards both extremism and moral decay.

I assert that the most significant cause of ideological deviation among youth today is this knowledge chaos, coupled with a weakness in cultural guidance. Today, everyone writes, speaks, listens, and receives, resulting in a mix-up of good and bad!

In my view, reality has turned into something resembling a tumultuous sea, with youths swimming and churning in its waves. Numerous ropes dangle, few ending with a lifebuoy to rescue those clinging to them, while many are baited traps that, if taken, would lead to dire consequences. Escape from this is only possible

with Allah's guidance, then by acquiring the skill to choose and distinguish the rope of salvation from the rope of ruin.

I start by noting that when discussing this contemporary intellectual and cultural reality, I do not single out any specific place; it is a global reality.

Additionally, it's unnecessary to elaborate on the positive aspects of this contemporary knowledge reality, as it has its pros, such as the rapid access to information, which has saved much time and effort previously spent on research and exploration.

The intention here is to highlight the negatives to avoid them and to make the best use of the positives.

## Characteristics of the Contemporary Knowledge Reality

**Firstly**, the abundance of cultural products.

As mentioned, we are living in a true knowledge explosion, regardless of content quality. I am speaking about quantity, not quality.

Consider what happens in just one minute:

- About 350,000 tweets are posted on Twitter.

- 3.4 million Snaps are created.

- 500 hours of video content is uploaded to YouTube.

- 7.5 million videos are viewed on YouTube.

- 200 million emails are sent.

- 41,000 posts are shared on Facebook.

- More than 43,000 images are uploaded to Instagram.

This is just on social media platforms, not to mention what is broadcasted on television channels, books, magazines, and newspapers.

Despite the information revolution in communication tools, printing presses continue to churn out vast amounts yearly. It's noteworthy that around two million and two hundred thousand books are published worldwide annually, with between eight thousand and eleven thousand new publishing houses emerging each year!

Thus, the most prominent characteristic we experience today is this extensive expansion in knowledge and information.

**Secondly**, the diversity and abundance of knowledge platforms and cultural mediums.

In addition to traditional cultural mediums - like books, magazines, newspapers, lectures, seminars, TV programs, films, and series, etc. - new platforms have emerged from which ideas and opinions flow, feeding minds in the fastest and easiest ways.

Social media platforms have emerged, filled with written and spoken words, still and moving images. Sites for sharing video clips, motion graphics, infographics, snaps, tweets, posts, audio chat rooms, and live broadcasts have become prevalent.

In today's world, we find cultural salons, cultural cafes, documentary programs, televised debates and discussions, and audiobooks. Even electronic games have transcended mere entertainment to become cultural platforms that present and direct thoughts.

**Thirdly**, this is accompanied by an often-unmethodical cultural movement and calls for unregulated cultural openness.

**Fourthly**, the proliferation of malicious and dubious individuals who have adeptly utilized these diverse platforms to disseminate their fallacies and poisons has become prevalent. In the past, one of these individuals would need significant effort to reach an audience's ears and hearts; today, this effort is minimal. Casting "bait" and pulling in those hooked has become all too easy.

**Fifthly**, a vast intellectual deceit exists; numerous degraded concepts are adorned in attractive, embellished rhetoric, presented in appealing manners, and logical fallacies are pitched as scientific truths.

**Sixthly**, there's a trend towards grabbing "canned" information. Amid the plethora of available knowledge, there's a surge in demand for quick and easy information, much like fast food. This preference often comes at the expense of diligence in seeking truth and accuracy. True information requires effort and time, but today's populace is in a rush, wanting immediate answers from a quick "Google" search, usually settling for the first or second result without much verification of its correctness.

**Seventhly**, there's often an absence of guidance. In the turbulent sea of information, youths, fresh in age and experience, navigate alone without the aid of a mentor or guide, making them easy prey for the schemes of human devils.

**Eighthly**, the lack of progression in learning presents another challenge. Nowadays, anyone can explore any cultural content, regardless of its suitability to their age or understanding level, and whether or not they've first acquired necessary foundational knowledge. This absence of progression can lead to a disordered cultural development since every field of knowledge has its basics and advanced stages; it's inappropriate for beginners to delve into advanced content.

**Ninthly**, most critically, there's unrestricted and unfiltered access to all kinds of information. Today, everything is accessible, including content that, according to religious standards, should be viewed with the utmost restraint. Doors are wide open to extremist and atheistic writings, to materials on magic and summoning jinn, astrology, fortune-telling, morally corrupt materials, and more. Today, even a primary school student can access such content readily.

## The Fruits of This Knowledge Chaos

The disorder in reading and reception - have led to several adverse outcomes. Among these, three stand out prominently:

**The first:** The cacophony of information has resulted in mental dispersion, raising numerous questions and doubts, affecting some to the point of doubting the core tenets of their faith, let alone its branches. Many young people experience cultural confusion and cognitive disarray, sometimes accompanied by distress, largely due to the contradictions in content and the abundance of discussions and counterarguments.

There's an "overload" of cultural products leading to "laxity"! We've reached a point where people exclaim, "Where do we go? By Allah, we no longer know who holds the truth!" This is one of the most significant issues spawned by the chaotic intellectual reality we live in.

**The second:** There's the competition against trusted, reliable, and credible sources of information. Today, many calls encourage reading, but unfortunately, few advocate for reading that helps the reader in their faith and then worldly matters. The youth or the intellectual is often diverted from our heritage that's filled with knowledge, ready to read hundreds of tweets, spending hours on

content of little benefit, sometimes more harmful than useful. Yet, they find it burdensome to delve into Ibn Kathir's Tafsir, Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab at-Tawhid, Ibn al-Qayyim's works, or any trustworthy book on creed, jurisprudence, interpretation, hadith, or even beneficial worldly knowledge.

**The third:** Many deviants and enemies of Allah have penetrated the minds of some Muslim youths. How did the one who detonated a mosque filled with Muslim worshippers reach such a level of deviation? And what about those who commit to the killing of their mother, father, or relative in the name of religion, or those who publicly declare their atheism, conversion to Christianity, or those who insolently attack the Quran and Sunnah? Where did these individuals come from? The answer: from a book, a video clip, tweets, or websites they entered empty-handed but left laden with misguided ideas and beliefs!

These three aspects are the most prominent outcomes of this intellectual chaos, and we seek Allah's help.

## Islamic Foundational Principles in the Methodology of Knowledge Reception

This subject is extensive and multifaceted, but I will limit the discussion to five key principles:

**First Principle:** Knowledge is a part of religion, so be cautious about whom you take your religion from. It is not proper or acceptable for a person to receive their religion, culture, or what nourishes their mind and heart from just anyone, especially in this era filled with those who have ulterior motives. Your religion is the most valuable thing you have, so know where you are drawing your information from, which you will adopt as your religion and belief.

**Second Principle:** It is not permissible to expose oneself to tribulations or to spread doubts. Islamic law has firmly proved this; you must not expose yourself to tribulation, nor should you be a cause for spreading doubts. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Whoever hears of the Dajjal should stay away from him. By Allah, a man will come to him thinking he is a believer, only to follow him due to the doubts he casts" (reported by Abu Dawud, 4319). This, despite being marked between his eyes as a disbeliever! This hadith is a significant foundation in warning against approaching trials and cutting off the means to approach them; for he who hovers around the sanctuary, risks falling into it! Therefore, when you expose yourself to tribulation, you are taking an uncalculated risk with the most valuable thing you have - your faith!

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was displeased when he saw Umar bin Al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, - who is the most knowledgeable and the best of this nation after Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, - reading some of the Jewish scriptures (as in Musnad 15156). How much more so for the ignorant person who reads atheistic philosophies, skeptical doctrines, and misguided ideas!

**Third Principle:** The Sharia (Islamic law) is the standard.

***And the Sharia is the balance of all affairs,***

***a witness to their branches and their essence.***

And He has said, Exalted is He: {So if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best *[way]* and best in result} *[Al-Nisa: 59]*. Thus, the reference is neither to intellect, customs, nor opinions, but the reference and the standard by which all things are weighed: the noble Sharia of Allah.

**The fourth principle:** The methodology of the righteous predecessors—who are the best of this Ummah, its best, and closest to truth and correctness—is to distance oneself from those things that confuse the creed. Thus, it has been repeatedly transmitted from the predecessors, may Allah have mercy on them, the advice to stay away from listening to those who have been tested in their religion and have become advocates of innovation and misguidance, spreading evil and corruption among the people. Why? Because religion is precious to these individuals, and they are not prepared to put it at the mercy of the winds.

If you are a follower of the righteous predecessors, then you must distance yourself from anything that confuses your religion and muddles your creed.

**The fifth principle:** "Be eager for what benefits you." This is the advice of the Prophet ﷺ (Sahih Muslim 2665); keep it in front of your eyes!

Be eager for what helps you in your religion and your worldly life, occupy yourself with what is beneficial, and ignore the rest. We hear today people saying, "We are the nation of 'Iqra' (Read), and the nation of 'Iqra' does not read!"

And I say: Correctly, we are the nation of {Read in the name of your Lord who created} *[Al-'Alaq: 1]*. It's not important just to read; what matters is to read what is beneficial. Otherwise, not reading is more beneficial for a person than reading what leads to ruin.

Read what is beneficial in this life; to read what will make you happy in the hereafter when you are commanded to read: {Read your book. You, yourself, are sufficient as an accountant against you today} *[Al-Isra: 14]*.

Reading, as an end in itself, is not the goal; rather, fruitful reading is a means to achieve the goal: to be among the happy ones! So, you may call out on the Day of Judgment: {Here, read my record, I did indeed think that I would meet my account} *[Al-Haqqah: 19 - 20]*.

And beware of being among those who say, {Oh, I wish I had not received my record} *[Al-Haqqah: 25]*.

Read what brings you closer to Paradise and distances you from the Hellfire.

Read what adds weight to your scale of virtuous deeds.

Read what helps you in your religion and worldly life.

Read in the name of your Lord who created!

They say, "The religion is not weak; let's read everything!"

Among the contemporary deceptions is the call by some people for the youth to engage in open, undisciplined exploration, relying on a refuted suspicion that relies on a logical fallacy called "appeal to emotion." They stir the emotions of those with little knowledge and grounding by asking: Are you weak? Is the religion weak in argument? The answer will surely be no. Then they say: Therefore, read everything, for the religion is not weak to fear for it this fear!

But the suspicion raised by this speaker is not a correct scientific or rational issue; it's merely playing with words to stir emotions to achieve what they want.

The response to this is from five brief aspects:

**Firstly**: By the grace of Allah, the religion of Allah is strong, and the fear is not for it but for the weak human whom the Creator described as weak {and the human was created weak} *[Al-Insan: 28]*.

**Secondly**: We ask the proponent of this suspicion: Do you assume infallibility for every reader? That is, can deviation in thought, doctrine, or morality occur?

I don't think anyone reasonable would answer anything but yes. Therefore, we've reached the intended point; we know where the causes of deviation come from, and the danger is not imagined but is felt tangibly. That's why we ask Allah Almighty for steadfastness every day, as included in our prayer: {Guide us to the straight path} *[Al-Fatihah: 6]*—asking Allah for steadfastness on the truth. The Prophet ﷺ the compassionate and merciful towards us, warned us about the trials of the end times, to the extent that he warned us - as in Sahih Muslim (118) - by saying: "Rush to do good deeds before trials come like a portion of the dark night. In the morning, a man will be a believer and by evening a disbeliever; or in the evening, he will be a believer and by morning a disbeliever, selling his religion for worldly gain." That is, in a brief time, not exceeding a few hours, a person's religion can turn upside down! We ask Allah for well-being and safety.

**Thirdly**: The principle of Sharia - to which we Muslims adhere - is that the more widespread the trials are, the greater the fear of them should be. Among the evidence for this is the prayer of Ibrahim, peace be upon him: {And keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols} *[Ibrahim: 35]*. He then explained the reason, saying: {Lord, indeed they have led many among the people astray} *[Ibrahim: 36]*. Notice that he justified his prayer, which indicates fear and apprehension, by the fact that the trial of idols had become great until it misled many people!

Who, after Ibrahim, peace be upon him, can be safe from affliction?

And who can deny these trials that have beset us from every side?

**Fourthly**: The fear of temptation is a sign of the strength of faith, not a sign of its weakness. The stronger the faith, the greater the fear of its loss and the further away from its causes. Hence, Ibrahim, peace be upon him, feared falling into polytheism, as previously mentioned, because he was the leader of the monotheists. Allah, the Almighty, narrated the prayer of those firmly grounded in knowledge: {Our Lord, do not let our hearts deviate after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from You; indeed, You are the Bestower} *[Ali 'Imran: 8]*.

It has been explained before that the Salaf, due to their immense faith, were very fearful for themselves and extremely cautious of those who misguide; their faith and intellect were strong; faith was immense in their hearts, not to be gambled with. Thus, any door through which falsehood could enter the soul should be closed.

**Fifthly**: Avoiding places of doubts and grazing in its pastures is not a result of a weakness in religion but of strength, as previously mentioned. It also saves time, and time is the capital of a person. Spending it on beneficial, pure sciences and useful skills is the essence of wisdom. What need do we have to read what may harm us or listen to what may be detrimental? If we spent all our time on beneficial things, we would not cover even some of it. So why waste it on what may harm our religion?

## Advice on Reading and Listening:

**First advice**: Beware of intellectual arrogance and embrace intellectual humility. Do not assume you know everything and can answer every doubt; this is a significant error and a great flaw! Know your limits and do not exceed them. It is not a defect to be ignorant of things, but the defect is in being deluded and involving yourself in what you are not competent in. No matter how intelligent you

are, you cannot grasp everything. If your muscles' ability to carry weights is limited, so is your brain's capacity to bear ideas.

**Second advice**: Know the creed of whom you read for and understand their methodology; whoever writes serves their creed.

**Third advice**: Value your time for it is precious; spend it only on what benefits you.

**Fourth advice**: Acquire the skill of critical thinking and do not be just a receiver. If you come across something far from what you know in your religion from the fundamentals of your belief, you should read it with a great deal of caution, and do not accept everything blindly.

**Fifth advice**: Stick to the fundamentals; the fundamentals you know: the pillars of faith, the basics of receiving and reasoning in this Sharia. Always cling to them. The Quran and Sunnah are the truth, and everything brought by the Prophet ﷺ is true, and anything contrary to that is false, whether you know it in detail or not. Cling to this while you read or listen, and do not deviate from it.

**Sixth advice**: Choose a trustworthy advisor to guide you on what to read, whom to listen to, where to start, what comes next, and what ends.

**Seventh advice**: Progress gradually in what you read and follow the correct methodology. Those deprived of the fundamentals are deprived of the outcomes.

**Eighth advice**: Do not be hasty! You want to become a great intellectual overnight! This cannot happen. Knowledge is gained over days and nights.

**Ninth advice**: Pray abundantly to Allah for guidance and steadfastness; the goal of culture and exploration is to reach guidance; ask for it from the One in whose hands it lies.

**Tenth advice:** Quality, not quantity! It doesn't matter how many books you've read; what matters is what you've learned. Otherwise, the multitude of books might add confusion to your confusion and ignorance to your ignorance.

**Eleventh advice:** The knowledge criterion is revelation; it is the secure source, the scale by which opinions are weighed, and the knowledge fortress that frees you from mistakes and illusions.

**Twelfth advice:** Reading is a means, not an end; beware that means do not turn into goals.

**Thirteenth advice:** Fortify yourself with the correct belief. The top priority in this era is to fortify oneself with the correct belief.

**Fourteenth advice:** Your religion is the most valuable thing you own, so beware of gambling with it! If you had a precious pearl, you wouldn't leave it lying on the road, and your religion is more valuable than this pearl, so be incredibly careful not to gamble with your religion.

**Fifteenth advice:** Do not make your heart a sponge! Unfortunately, most hearts have become spongy today, meaning they have become a place for doubts. If you can only look at the absolute truth, do so. If you can only read the correct things, do so. If you were afflicted, then make your heart like glass; it sees falsehood and knows it but does not let it seep in.

**Sixteenth advice:** The fortunate is the one who takes warning by others! There are many who have fallen, and the reason is incorrect listening or reading. Beware that you do not become the next to fall!

**Seventeenth advice:** Safety is unmatched; beware of intellectual adventures. Caution and precaution are not cowardice; rather, they are the correct intellectual bravery.

**Eighteenth advice:** Beware of being deceived by disguises and slogans, and you must read between the lines; perhaps there is more behind the hill.

**Nineteenth advice:** Hearts are weak, and doubts are enticing. This reality should not escape your mind.

**Twentieth advice:** Fame is not a measure of trustworthiness. The famous are many today, but their fame may be due to reasons other than academic excellence and extensive knowledge, so be aware that some of the famous, especially on social media, are void of authentic knowledge and science; do not make fame your criterion for acceptance and reception.

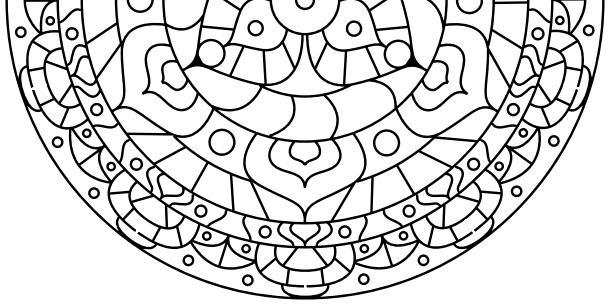
**Twenty-first advice:** Make some books your friends! That is, keep them close to you, indulge in reading them, and revisit them time after time. Once you finish them, start reading them again for the immense benefit they hold with Allah's help.

I recommend to you three "friendly books," and you may consider others like them:

**The first book:** Tafsir As-Sa'di (Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan) by Shaikh Abdurrahman bin Nasir As-Sa'di. If you encounter anything that confuses you in understanding a verse or wish to know its meaning, make this book your trusted source. If you manage to read it from beginning to end, I guarantee you will gain immense benefit, Allah willing. If you wish to advance to a more comprehensive interpretation afterward, Ibn Kathir's Tafsir awaits you.

**The second book:** "al-Shifa al-'Alil" by Ibn Al-Qayyim, is a magnificent book. Were it written with the water of the eyes; it would not be excessive.

**The third book:** "al-Irshad ila Sahih al-'Itiqad" by Shaikh Saleh Al-Fawzan, may Allah preserve him, is a greatly beneficial book on creed.



# Chapter Eighteen: The Correct Approach in Dealing with Doubts

The word "doubt" (Shubhah) can be used in diverse ways and are mentioned in various contexts. However, our focus here is on the kind of doubt related to knowledge.

Its essence is an argument mixed with both truth and falsehood.

If you prefer, you can say: It is falsehood that resembles truth.

Or it's falsehood in the guise of truth.

Or dressing the body of falsehood in the attire of truth.

Or discourse whose exterior is merciful, yet its interior is torment.

All these definitions revolve around a single meaning, which is: an argument where fabricators blend falsehood with truth, thereby embellishing the falsehood until it appears as truth, confusing the ignorant.

## The Danger of Doubts

Doubts are perilous, indeed! They are the vestibules of temptation, the precursors of deviation, and the ladders to every misguidance.

Truly, their danger is immense. Once they infiltrate and secure a place in the heart, they wreak havoc. Has anyone ever deviated or apostatized except due to a doubt?

Has any sect diverged except because of a doubt?

Has anyone who has turned against the community of Muhammad ﷺ with the sword, killing, exploding, and terrorizing, done so except because of a doubt?

If the danger of doubts was significant in the past, today it is even more critical, as it ravages young men and women, made even more accessible to them through social media and communication tools. It penetrates every home and enters every chamber, reaching those wrapped in their blankets!

Not to mention the beauty of its embellishment, the allure of its presentation, and its varied formats, from written to auditory to visual content. There are tweets, posts, and video clips, and doubts may even appear in dialogue programs, subtly present in a theatrical scene, a documentary film, a story, or a novel. When you combine the abundance of its presence with the amplification of those who present it, add to this the weak faith and the shallow religious knowledge of many people, you can grasp the size of the danger posed by doubts. Indeed, they are the deadly pandemic of our era, spreading confusion, issuing disturbance, and loosening the bonds of certainty.

A doubt is a marketer for misguidance. Otherwise, if misguidance were presented to people in its ugly, unembellished form, it would not be accepted. This shows the danger of doubts. The confusion orchestrated by the proponents of misguidance is their most lethal weapon against people's beliefs and religions. Many people only see the surface of words, dazzled by their decorations, without diving into the realities and meanings. Allah, the Exalted, says: {Do not mix truth with falsehood} *[Al-Baqarah: 42]*. Mixing truth with falsehood is precisely the essence of introducing doubts.

## The Legitimate Method for a Muslim to Deal with Religious Doubts

The discussion here pertains to two scenarios: a state of well-being and a state of affliction.

**The first scenario:** A state of well-being from doubt, where it has not reached the soul nor penetrated the heart. The obligation here is for a Muslim to completely shun and ignore it. This is a mandatory religious duty. Allah says: {And shun the abomination} *[Al-Mudathir: 5]* and the Prophet ﷺ as reported in Sahih al-Bukhari (10), said: "The emigrant is the one who forsakes what Allah has prohibited." The content of doubts, which stems from the prohibitions of Allah, entails speaking about Allah without knowledge, mixing truth with falsehood, and is categorically forbidden by Allah. Therefore, it's mandatory to abandon them. Allah also says: {And when you see those who engage in *[offensive]* discourse concerning Our verses, then turn away from them} *[Al-An'am: 68]*. The command to turn away implies obligation, so it's obligatory for a Muslim to avoid doubts, indeed, to stay away from their vicinity, and not to approach their places at all.

***True safety from Salma and her neighbor lies,***

***in not passing by the valley where their essence abides.***

Do not visit the sites of those led astray, do not follow the accounts of the suspicious, do not read the books of the deviant, do not watch the clips of the forsaken, and do not peruse the channels of the corrupters.

If you would flee from a person with leprosy as you would flee from a lion, then what of a person with leprosy of the heart, mind, and religion! Be aware that the spark of doubt, once it enters the heart, may burn it down.

Do not be deceived by calls for liberation and openness, or by the desire for curiosity. This is a skill we must learn to cultivate within ourselves; the skill of seeking safety.

If a clip reaches you and you know it's from one of those who lead others astray, calmly, do not open it but delete it. You have been spared by Allah from affliction; why bring harm upon yourself? Act in response to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, heed the word of your Lord, and obey His command; He says: {And when you see those who engage in *[offensive]* discourse concerning Our verses, then turn away from them until they enter another conversation. And if Satan causes you to forget, then do not sit after the reminder with the wrongdoing people} *[Al-An'am: 68]*.

And our Prophet ﷺ says, as in Sahihain (Bukhari 4547, Muslim 2665): "When you see those who follow that which is not entirely clear therein *[of the Quran]*, then they are the ones whom Allah has named *[as the transgressors]*; so, beware of them." "Beware of them" is an imperative form, implying obligation, hence it's a command from our Prophet ﷺ that must be followed, and this is courage.

Some people think this is cowardice, weakness, and timidity, but the truth is, this is praiseworthy intellectual bravery and a sign of strong faith, because faith for a Muslim is precious and invaluable,

hence he is most keen on preserving it, thus he distances his hearing and heart from anything false.

Only those with great certainty, strong faith, and profound fear of the Merciful avoid doubts and do not dare expose their certainty to criticism, except for those who take their religion lightly. It is essential to be convinced that faith and certainty are the greatest blessings, and preserving blessings is an obligation, which includes not listening to doubts and staying away from them; for they are enticing, and hearts are weak.

Imam Malik, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "Whatever you may play with, do not play with matters of your religion." Doubts are a plague, and one should not expose oneself to plagues; safety is unparalleled, and prevention is better than cure.

Doubts are a form of temptation, and the Prophet ﷺ said, "He who peeps into it is likely to be lured into it; so, whoever finds a refuge or a sanctuary to protect him from it, let him take shelter in it." How many persons have been deceived by their knowledge, entered a site, listened to a misleading person, and a doubt lodged in their heart, never to leave, but rather it struck them down and wreaked havoc.

**The second situation**: The ordeal of doubt: When a person receives a message, comes across a clip, or reads a tweet without intending to seek falsehood, and suddenly doubt enters their heart and begins to affect them; what should they then do?

There are seven things that should be done in this situation:

**Firstly**: Those afflicted by it should remain strong and not weaken, steadfast and not falter, composed and not shaken; for Allah has guided you to the truth, monotheism, and following the Sunnah, so you should not be swayed by every stray and incoming

doubt. Let the doubt remain just that, a doubt, and it will disappear by Allah's guidance and assistance; do not be faint-hearted, affected by everything, be strong and composed.

Know that the emergence of doubt is not evidence of its correctness, nor does its well-crafted nature indicate its truth, nor does your lack of knowledge for an answer prove the absence of one. Therefore, you must be strong and composed in the face of it.

**Secondly**: Turn to Allah sincerely and humbly.

Hurry in this regard and seek guidance from the One who holds the solution to all matters, for guidance and misguidance are from Him. Turn to Allah sincerely and be glad of good tidings, for Allah guides those who turn to Him, {Say, "Indeed, Allah misleads whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns *[back]*"} *[Al-Ra'd: 27]*.

If you are sincere to Allah, He will be sincere to you, removing what troubles your heart, and beware of being lazy and thinking that the matter is easy, for many have been struck by doubt but did not sincerely pray to Allah to remove it, and it overcame them! Some may attach their hearts more to scholars and students of knowledge to remove doubt from their heart than attaching it to Allah, and this is from weak faith and monotheism. The matter is entirely in Allah's hands, and all good is from Him. So, show your poverty and need for Allah, turn to Him sincerely and desperately, and be glad of good tidings, Allah will not disappoint you, for He is the Generous, the Merciful, exalted be He.

**Thirdly**: You must not indulge in it or dwell on it in your heart.

Some people, when they hear a doubt and its effect begins to seep into their heart, they engage with it; by looking into it, analyzing it, developing it, and branching out from it! Thus, the devil finds

an entrance through this aspect, and a small issue becomes a big problem! This is not the approach of the Sharia.

You must extinguish it by not indulging in it, as it might just be a passing thought or whispering from the devil and will soon disappear by Allah's permission.

**Fourthly**: Do not speak of it to anyone; do not spread it among your companions, nor broadcast it among your peers. Do not be the reason someone else suffers as you have.

It is wrong that if a doubt arises, the one afflicted by it writes in a "WhatsApp group" - entered by both the young and the old - asking, "What is the answer to such and such doubt?"

This should not be done at all, as it only spreads falsehood further.

**Fifthly**: You should go to the experts to seek treatment.

If you were physically hurt, whether slightly or severely, you would rush to see doctors, and there is nothing wrong with that, but what affects your heart is more dangerous, and its harm greater, and its doctors are the knowledgeable scholars and students of knowledge. You should go to them and seek the comprehensive answer, and your Prophet ﷺ said, "Is not the remedy for confusion to ask?" (Abu Dawood 337), and Allah says, {And if they had referred it back to the Messenger and to those of authority among them, those who can draw it out from them would have known it} *[Al-Nisa: 83]*. And here, those of authority are the scholars[12].

And Allah Almighty said, {So ask the people of the message if you do not know} *[Al-Nahl: 43]*, then go to a scholar or a well-

(12) As Hasan, Qatadah, and Ibn Jurayj have said, see: Zad Al-Masir (1/439).

versed student of knowledge whom you believe can benefit you and remove the doubt.

I point out here that many people today, when they encounter a doubt and do not know its answer, their first action is to search for the answer on the internet; on Google, YouTube, or elsewhere. This should be dealt with caution and awareness; your search might lead you to misguided sites!

Know that the important thing is not just to find an answer, but to find a correct answer from a reliable source, which benefits you and does not deepen the doubt within you.

So, I advise you to deal with caution with those you do not know in the expanses of the internet.

**Sixthly**: Whatever happens; you must adhere to the fundamentals, revert to the principles, and refer the ambiguous back to the clear-cut; this is a highly effective remedy.

**Seventhly**: Hold onto a general answer if you are afflicted with a doubt whose answer you do not know, which is: Your knowledge of the truth is sufficient to know the falsehood of what opposes it, as Allah Almighty says, {So what is after the truth except error} *[Yunus: 32]*.

To know the falsehood of a doubt, it is not necessary to know in detail what refutes it, but it suffices to know that it opposes the truth; meaning: falsehood is recognized in two ways: knowing the definitive refutation that invalidates the falsehood, and another way: knowing the truth; thus, anything that opposes it is false.

So, if someone comes to me dressed in a doubt related to divinity, prophethood, the Quran, the Sunnah, or rulings and I do not know its answer; I will say to him confidently: You have brought me something whose detailed answer I do not know,

it is ambiguous to me, and there is no problem in it remaining ambiguous, but I am certain that it is false, and the proof of this is that it opposes the truth, and nothing that opposes the truth can be except false. This is the general answer.

This applies to the layman or the beginner; as for the scholars and the well-grounded students of knowledge: it is incumbent upon them to rise to unveil and refute doubts, while observing wisdom in that, and blessed is the one whom Allah has guided to defend the religion of Allah, His book, and the Sunnah of His messenger ﷺ.

## Is it better to spread doubts among people or to keep them secret?

It appears - and Allah knows best - that the obligation here is to differentiate; sometimes wisdom lies in obliterating falsehood by not mentioning it and not mentioning its speaker. The scholars said, "Ignoring the rejected statement is more likely to obliterate it and dim the mention of its speaker"; thus, this approach is correct and indeed necessary in its place; when the falsehood is obscure and dormant, not spread among the people.

However, if it has spread and gained traction, it should be refuted, and its flaws exposed; so that people may beware of it.

The principles of refuting doubts, whether the response is general or a private dialogue with someone puzzled.

These principles are seven, which are:

**Firstly**: That the doubt - as I have mentioned before - is widespread, having an impact and traction, such doubts should be warned against.

**Secondly**: That before warning against it, the truth should be established and clarified; so that the exposition of falsehood is put in its proper place.

**Thirdly**: That the one who responds to the doubts should be qualified for this task; meaning a knowledgeable scholar or a well-versed student of knowledge.

As for the ignorant, they have no place whatsoever in this field, and this is not their place, for the response of the ignorant to the doubt increases the puzzled person's perplexity and adds illness to their ailment; so, beware.

Therefore, O father, teacher, friend, or imam of mosque: If someone comes to you affected by a doubt that has caused them confusion, encompass them with gentleness and calm, treat them with kindness and patience, for the goal is to convince, not to humiliate, and to turn them towards, not away. So, embrace them with open-mindedness, and beware of confronting them with assault, insult, or harshness, for this may drive them away irreversibly. Then, if you have the decisive answer and the healing balm, seek help with Allah and do not spare effort or time, for this is one of the greatest ways of giving in the cause of Allah and supporting His Sharia. But if you are not the knight of this field, then fear Allah in it, and do not deepen the doubt within them with your weak answer, but rather take them to a scholar whose answer quenches the thirst.

**Fourthly**: The response to the doubt must be strong and solid, in such a way that its light removes all darkness from the heart caused by it.

Those who cannot do this; and merely respond to this doubt offhand - as it is said - with brief words that neither heal nor quench have not fulfilled their duty towards Islam, and their words

do not bring healing. Rather, the response should be of utmost precision and strength, both in style and in scientific content, as this is among the important matters that should not be overlooked.

**Fifthly**: Considering the public interest in the issue of summarizing or detailing in mentioning the doubt, for this situation requires understanding.

**Sixthly**: The response to the doubt must be immediate after its presentation, without delay.

The emergence of the doubt should not be in criticism, and the answer delayed! This is a significant error.

**Seventhly**: If the dialogue is a private one with someone who asked about a doubt: It is necessary to differentiate between a healthy person and someone suffering from a psychological illness or obsessive-compulsive disorder; as reality has revealed that many issues are asked by people with psychological problems, and those in such a condition need psychological treatment more than knowledge to remove the doubt.

## Protective Measures in the Upbringing of the Young Generation to Guard Against the Influence of Doubts

This topic is important and broad, and I summarize - with Allah's guidance - essential aspects related to it. But first, there are three preliminary points to note:

**Firstly**, by protective measures, we mean efforts to endow the youth with a safeguard for their minds and hearts, which protects them - by Allah's permission - from the dangers and serious effects of doubts. The goal here is for them to taste the flavor of faith and feel its sweetness. Anyone whose heart has been touched by the

cheerfulness of faith and illuminated by its lights will not deviate from it by even a hair's breadth.

**Secondly**, our drive to collaborate in this area is motivated by a desire to guide the youth and show mercy towards them, not to dominate them. This is a significant position of faith, as the path of the prophets, peace be upon them, was keen on guiding creation. If our religion holds precedence in our hearts and concerns, we dedicate our efforts, time, and even our life and death to it.

**Thirdly**, it is essential to understand the psyche of today's youth! The youth of today are not the same as the youth thirty or forty years ago; their psychologies have changed, their language has changed, their priorities have changed, their ways of thinking and engaging with issues have changed, their feelings towards themselves and others have changed... many things about them have changed! Therefore, we must keep up with this change, improving our dialogue and interaction with them.

As for the means - or procedures - of fortification, they include the following:

**Firstly**, emphasis on proofs, especially on four topics: proofs of the existence and lordship of the Creator, blessed and exalted be He, His greatness, proofs of the prophethood of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ proofs of the authenticity of the Quran, and proofs of the perfection of religion. Something about this has been mentioned before, and among the recommended programs in this regard are reading greatly beneficial booklets written in an engaging and smooth style; they can be read individually or in groups at home, family gatherings, or with friends. These booklets by Shaikh Abdul Rahman Al-Sa'di - the author of the famous Tafsir - may Allah have mercy on him, include: "Intellectual Proofs of the Oneness of the Lord and Aspects of His Perfection", "The

Fundamentals of Religious Beliefs", "Useful Means for a Happy Life", "The Concise Pearl in the Beauties of the Islamic Religion", "The Correct Religion Solves All Problems", "The Decisive Arguments and Proofs in Refuting the Principles of Atheists", and "The Divine Advice".

In addition to watching a series of beneficial videos in this area - some of them in motion graphic format and others are regular videos - produced by trusted committees and centers specialized in reinforcing certainty and critiquing atheism and irreligion.

**Secondly**: Reviving Reflection.

Proper reflection is a great form of worship, much neglected. It is essential to accustom the youth to it, especially reflecting on three things:

- Reflecting on the meanings of the Quran; to accustom ourselves to understanding, each day, at least the meaning of one word from the Quran, with the interpretation I previously recommended (Tafsir Al-Sa'di) or other theologically reliable interpretations.

- Reflecting on the meanings of the Beautiful Names of Allah, for which I recommend the booklet: "Explanation of the Beautiful Names of Allah", by Al-Sa'di.

- Reflecting on the Divine signs in nature, either through direct observation or via video clips, plentifully available online.

**Thirdly**: Warning them about the avenues of evil and the foundations of thoughts through which the purveyors of falsehood infiltrate, some of which have been discussed in this book.

**Fourthly**: Familiarizing them with the stories of those who have converted to Islam, both ancient and modern. The internet is replete with such videos. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "There

are three qualities; whoever has them will taste the sweetness of faith: that Allah and His messenger are more beloved to him than anything else, that he loves a person and does not love him except for Allah, and that he would hate to return to disbelief after Allah has saved him from it as he would hate to be thrown into the fire." Agreed upon (Bukhari 21, Muslim 43).

Knowing the stories of those who embraced Islam and abhorred disbelief brings you closer to experiencing the sweetness of faith; this is tried and tested.

**Fifthly**: Magnifying the importance of religion in their hearts from an early age.

To instill in them that religion is the first thing, the most important thing, the most valuable thing, indeed everything, and it is what precedes, and everything else follows it.

**Sixthly**: Focusing on the comprehensive answer previously explained and ingraining it in their souls.

**Seventhly**: Accustoming them to the skill of seeking safety, which has been discussed previously.

**Eighthly**: Attempting to familiarize them with the wisdom behind the legislation of rulings as much as possible, as this increases their certainty. The wisdom has been discussed before; knowing it increases faith, and ignorance of it does not decrease faith.

For this, I recommend the works of Shaikh Ibn Uthaymin, may Allah have mercy on him; he was keen on explaining the wisdom behind the legislation of rulings, which can be gleaned from his words.

**Ninthly**: It would be wise to ensure our children and brothers keep good company, possibly the most challenging thing mentioned

here! If only good company - which neither exceeds bounds nor falls short - could be bought with money; it would then be worth spending both the valuable and the cheap!

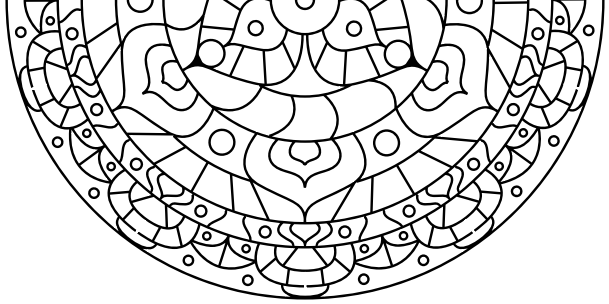
Anyway, let us strive, and success is with Allah.

Tenth and lastly: No matter how much we do in this field, the most crucial factor, which we might overlook, is supplication.

So, supplicate, then supplicate, then supplicate. And Allah knows best.

### *For further benefit*

I recommend reading the introduction of the book "Kashf Al-Shubuhat" by Shaikh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, may Allah have mercy on him, where he reaches the comprehensive answer, and it is worthy of attention.



# Chapter Nineteenth: The Correct Methodology in Dealing with the Differences Among Scholars

"The differences among Sharia scholars" has become a subject of inquiry today. Furthermore, some with ulterior motives have used it as a source of confusion and skepticism, especially with the emergence of disagreements on various social media and media platforms. Thus, many people ask: Why do scholars differ? And whom should we follow?

Indeed, the matter has escalated with some ignorant and weak in faith to the point of having a bad opinion of Sharia, accusing it of inconsistency; because they think that the disagreement is due to the Sharia itself, which is undoubtedly a mistaken belief. The differences among scholars are due to them, not to the Sharia, as will be clarified, by the will of Allah.

Not to mention that some people have taken the topic of disagreement to an extreme due to a misconception, coming to

understand from the word "disagreement" nothing but leniency! This could lead to a deficiency in servitude.

Thus, addressing this topic was necessitated by the need to clarify and correctly understand it, without excess or negligence.

Disagreement exists, and its presence cannot be denied. However, it should be established from the outset that the existence of disagreement is not due to the law and does not arise from it. Rather, it is due to the scholars and the various levels of understanding and perception that Allah, the Exalted, has bestowed upon them.

It is no secret that the law encourages unity and discourages dispute and division due to the severe consequences they entail. Allah, the Almighty, says: {And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided} *[Ali 'Imran: 103]*, and the Prophet ﷺ says as reported by Bukhari (2410): "Do not differ, for those before you differed and perished."

It can be deduced that disagreement is naturally expected to occur among Muslims. However, they are required to strive to eliminate it as much as possible since agreement is better than disagreement.

When disagreement occurs and everyone fears Allah the Almighty and seeks the truth, then the disagreement will not lead to division, fragmentation, and the emergence of hatred.

## Causes of Disagreement Among Scholars:

The disagreement among scholars has reasons, the most important of which are two:

**The first reason**: Allah, the Exalted, created people with different mental capabilities, so their understandings vary in terms

of comprehension, deduction, and prioritization. If they were all identical in their thinking, there would be no disagreement, and thus what may be apparent to Zaid may not be apparent to Amr.

The second reason, which follows the first, is that Allah, the Mighty and Sublime, did not make the evidence equally clear and decisive. Some pieces of evidence are definitive in their indication, while others are speculative. Furthermore, the evidence varies in their authenticity; some are definitively authentic, while others are less so. Therefore, the views of jurists vary in understanding the evidence, in deducing from them, in accepting them, and in applying them to reality as well.

Thus, the occurrence of disagreement is consistent with human nature, which entails imperfection and weakness, {And mankind was created weak} *[Al-Nisa: 28]*. This is not limited to Sharia scholars; doctors differ, astronomers differ, linguists differ, and so on.

Perhaps in some matters, a scholar may not have received a piece of evidence or might have forgotten it or received and retained it but erred in understanding and deducing from it. For all these reasons, Allah, the Exalted, willed the occurrence of disagreement among scholars.

## Some Wisdoms Behind the Occurrence of Disagreement Among Islamic Scholars, Past and Present:

**The first**: The occurrence of this disagreement makes us realize that the only one with complete knowledge is Allah, the Exalted, alone. He is the One distinguished by perfection, free from any deficiency.

**The second**: This disagreement motivates effort, research, and exploration for the correct answer, which is a means of acquiring reward.

**The third**: This disagreement calls us to not exaggerate in our veneration of scholars; for they can be correct or mistaken, and we would not know this except through disagreement, as it necessitates some being right and others wrong.

**The fourth**: The occurrence of this disagreement necessitated a broader scope for subsequent diligent scholars to exert effort in contemporary issues, to search for solutions compatible with Sharia among the different scholars' opinions. If all matters were unanimous, there would be no room for consideration and diligence.

**The fifth**: The existence of disagreement among scholars was greatly beneficial in developing the juristic personality, as jurisprudential disputes, evidential discussions, and robust scientific debate were extremely helpful in training scholars and sharpening their intellects. Hence, familiarity with jurisprudential disagreement among scholars was one of the qualifications that scholars paid attention to, to the extent that Qatadah ibn Di'ama, one of the Successors, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "Whoever does not know disagreement has not smelled the fragrance of jurisprudence."

## Principles in Dealing with the Differences Among Scholars:

Here are a set of principles that would be good to keep in mind when considering the words of scholars and their differences:

**The first principle**: The disagreement among scholars - which we are discussing - is the disagreement among scholars of Ahl

al-Sunnah, which is a jurisprudential disagreement that does not undermine their true unity. Thus, we are talking about a jurisprudential disagreement. As for the creed and issues of monotheism, the people of Sunnah agree on them, and they are not subject to disagreement.

**The second principle**: Disagreement is predetermined by nature for profound wisdom. The basis is that the differences among Muslim scholars were not motivated by whims or deviation but are divine wisdom, with reasons that have been mentioned before.

**The third principle**: Sharia issues are of two types:

- Agreed upon.

- Disputed.

Knowing this is important because some people, hearing the word disagreement frequently, think that everything is subject to disagreement, which is not correct. There are many issues on which there is consensus, and among the disputed matters, some disputes are considered significant, and some are considered aberrant.

**The fourth principle**: The truth in the matters where people have differed is one known to Allah, Almighty. Those who reach it are correct and have double reward, and those who miss it are mistaken but have a single reward. The rule here is: Not every Mujtahid (Muslim legal jurist) is correct - i.e., correct in truth - but every Mujtahid has a share - i.e., a share of the reward.

**The fifth principle**: It is obligatory for every Muslim to strive to know the truth and act upon it in matters of agreement or disagreement.

The intention should be to know the will of Allah and His messenger ﷺ and act upon it. This is a matter in which there

is no leniency {Follow what has been revealed to you from your Lord and do not follow other than Him any allies. Little do you remember} *[Al-A'raf: 3]*.

**The sixth principle**: The disagreement among scholars indicates their agreement!

Because the basis of their disagreement is that each one of them wants to reach the knowledge of what Allah and His messenger ﷺ intend and to follow what Allah loves. Therefore, they are agreed on this goal; they did not flatter others by agreeing with them at the expense of following the truth.

Thus, their disagreement in scholarly matters is a proof of their agreement on something greater; that is, following the truth, enforcing Sharia, and prioritizing piety over whims.

**The seventh principle**: The presumption regarding the Muslim scholars who have a true standing in this nation is that none of them deliberately opposes the truth or contests the evidence of the Quran and Sunnah. This is known by examining their conditions and known through their good religiosity and fairness. This requires thinking well of them.

**The eighth principle**: No one's words should be always accepted universally and places except for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. As for anyone else, their words may be taken or left. Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them, beautifully said as reported by Tabarani in his Major Compilation (11941): "There is no one except that his words are taken and left, except for the Prophet ﷺ." Malik, may Allah have mercy on him, said *[Siyaar A'laam an-Nubalaa 8/93]*: "Everyone's word can be taken and left, except for the inhabitant of this grave," pointing to the Prophet's grave ﷺ.

And truly said by someone:

Every person other than those they corrected,

their words can be taken and left.

**The ninth principle**: The disciplined scientific disagreement aimed at reaching the truth should not be a cause for division nor generate animosities. In such cases, the famous saying applies: "Disagreement in opinion does not spoil cordiality in friendship." Since the time of the Companions, Muslim scholars have differed and debated while maintaining affection and brotherhood in faith.

One of the excellent examples of the application of this by the Imams of Islam is what Yunus as-Sadafi, may Allah have mercy on him, a companion of Al-Shafi'i, said: "I have never seen anyone more sensible than Al-Shafi'i. I debated with him one day on a matter, then we parted ways, and he met me, took my hand, and said: 'O Abu Musa, can we not remain brothers even if we disagree on a matter?'" Al-Dhahabi, may Allah have mercy on him, commented on this by saying: "This indicates the perfection of this Imam's intellect and his self-understanding, as contemporaries have always differed." *[Siyaar A'laam an-Nubalaa 10/17]*.

**The tenth principle**: In any matter where there is clear, authentic evidence, any disagreement that arises in it is insignificant and should not be considered. The obligation for every Muslim is to follow the evidence and discard what contradicts it, as Almighty Allah says: {And it is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should have any choice in their matter} *[Al-Ahzab: 36]*.

## The Muslim's Stance on Jurisprudential Disputes:

The Muslim's stance on jurisprudential disputes, in summary, falls into three categories, depending on their understanding and

grasp of the Islamic sciences. Each category has its own ruling, so a Muslim might be:

- A layperson.

- A knowledgeable jurist capable of Ijtihad.

- Someone with knowledge that elevates them above the layperson level, yet not to the level of Ijtihad.

**As for the layperson**: it is their duty to ask people of knowledge and act according to the fatwa of the one they consulted. The scholars have agreed that laypeople must follow their scholars. Allah, the Exalted, says: {So ask the people of the message if you do not know} *[Al-Nahl: 43]*.

**As for the scholar, who has attained the level of Ijtihad**: it is their duty to exert effort in the issue and do their utmost to reach the correct conclusion amidst the differences. If after consideration a ruling appears more convincing to them, they are not permitted to deviate from what their Ijtihad has concluded, by consensus.

**As for those with knowledge that elevates them above the lay level but does not reach the level of Ijtihad**: their ruling varies depending on the situation. If they can examine the issue and weighing the opinions of scholars to reach the most convincing one, then they should do of what they are capable. However, if they are unable to do so, they should place themselves in the position of a layperson and ask the people of knowledge and act according to their fatwa.

If someone asks: What should a layperson do if the fatwas of the jurists differ?

The answer includes several points:

**Firstly**, their intention should be to reach the truth and what Allah loves and is pleased with. This is a matter of faith that must be established within oneself.

**Secondly**, if the fatwas differ without the individual seeking out this disagreement, and they have some ability to discern the more convincing opinion among the scholarly views, then they should follow what they believe to be correct.

**Thirdly**, if they are unable to understand the arguments and weigh them - which is most common among laypeople - then they should weigh between the mujtahids and follow the one they find most convincing personally. Meaning, it can be said to them: What would you do if doctors disagreed on the treatment of your child? Do in that issue what you would do in this one, exactly!

Some scholars have said: If someone's child becomes ill and they are not a doctor, and they administer medication based on their opinion, they would be considered negligent and liable. If they consult a doctor, they would not be negligent. If there are two doctors in town and they disagree about the medication, and the parent goes against the better one, they are considered negligent. The superiority of the two doctors is known through widespread reports, the acknowledgment of the less superior by the more superior, and by signs that suggest a preponderance of belief. Similarly, regarding scholars: the superior is known through hearsay and indications, not by researching the knowledge itself. It is not appropriate to go against what is commonly accepted as superior. This is the most correct opinion to us and the most fitting with the overall meaning of controlling behavior with the reins of piety and obligation.

**Fourthly**, if the layperson says: I cannot weigh between the scholars, for they are all esteemed scholars! It is said: Go to a scholar

or a student of knowledge and ask them to weigh between the two opinions for you, then follow what they recommend.

**Fifthly**, if they say: I cannot do it! It is said: Then you must take a precautionary approach, acting on the Prophet's ﷺ saying: "Leave what makes you doubt for what does not make you doubt" *[Tirmidhi 2518]*.

In conclusion: The matter is a matter of faith, followed by a moment of accountability. {By your Lord, We will surely question them all, about what they used to do} *[Al-Hijr: 92 - 93]*. Therefore, act with your gaze fixed towards there, towards that grand moment!

## Is it Valid to Use Disagreement to Ease the Obligations of Sharia?

Some people have a misconception and misunderstanding, thinking that disagreement necessarily implies facilitation! So, when told, "There is a disagreement on this issue," they assume it means the matter is easy! It's as if they were told: You may choose whatever you like and take from the opinions whatever you wish!

Undoubtedly, this is a wrong understanding, and this is what scholars intended by prohibiting the pursuit of concessions (looking for the easiest opinions). Here, the concessions are not the legitimate Sharia concessions, like shortening prayers or breaking the fast-during travel, etc. Instead, pursuing concessions here means that an individual chooses from each school of thought whatever is easiest for them; in a matter of trade, for example, where there is a disagreement leading to two opinions of prohibition and permissibility, they adopt the permissive opinion because it aligns more with their desires. Then, they encounter a disputed matter in fasting or Hajj and act according to the easiest opinion, and so on, moving between disputes choosing the easiest opinion, with the justification: the matter is disputed, so do not restrict what is broad!

This approach is incorrect and not permissible, and this is supported by four summarized points:

**The first point**: Such behavior is prohibited by the consensus of scholars. Sulaiman at-Taymi, one of the Tabi'in, said: "If you took the concession of every scholar, all evil would be gathered in you." Then Ibn Abd al-Barr commented on it, saying: "This is a consensus, and I know of no disagreement on it" *[Jami' Bayan al-Ilm wa Fadlih 2/927]*.

Ibn al-Salah, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "Know that whoever is satisfied with his fatwa or action being in accordance with an opinion or an aspect of the issue and acts according to what he wishes from the opinions or aspects without considering which is more correct or adhering to it: has indeed erred and breached the consensus" *[Fatawa Ibn al-Salah 1/62]*.

So, it is established among the scholars that the pursuit of concessions only occurs from someone who takes their religion lightly.

**The second point**: Allah, the Exalted, has commanded us to refer what we disagree and dispute about back to the Quran and Sunnah. Allah, the Almighty, says: {And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best *[way]* and best in result} *[Al-Nisa: 59]*. And Allah says: {And in anything over which you disagree - its ruling is *[to be referred]* to Allah} *[Al-Shura: 10]*.

Therefore, it is our duty to refer disputes back to the Quran and Sunnah, and to search for what is closest to correctness, not to submit the disagreement to our desires and whims.

Thus, pursuing concessions and seeking ease in this manner contradicts the command of Allah, the Exalted.

**The third point**: Allah, the Exalted, has forbidden following unlawful desires, as He, the Almighty, says: {And do not follow *[your own]* desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah} *[Sad: 26]*. And Allah says: {But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from *[unlawful]* desires, then indeed, Paradise will be *[his]* refuge} *[Al-Nazi'at: 40 - 41]*.

Pursuing concessions and selectively choosing from various opinions based on personal preference is, in essence, aligning with the whims of the self, which is exactly what Allah has prohibited. Being tested with obligations requires that the servant, in matters that arise, seeks what brings them closer to piety, not to follow their desires and whims.

Our duty as servants to our Lord, the Praiseworthy Guardian, is for our desires to follow our religion, not for our religion to follow our desires.

**The fourth point**: Advocating for the pursuit of concessions and justifying disagreement leads to numerous corruptions, including:

- Disrespecting the religion, as it becomes uncontrolled and boundless.
- Losing its reverence from hearts, as it becomes a plaything in people's hands.
- Boldness in transgressing the limits set by Sharia.

And these are significant corruptions indeed.

In summary: Our duty when faced with scholarly disagreements is to earnestly seek the truth and what is closer to what Allah and His Messenger ﷺ desire, regardless of whether this opinion is the more lenient or the stricter one.

If someone argues for the permissibility of pursuing concessions with the hadith: "The disagreement of my Ummah is a mercy."

Then it is said: This hadith is widely circulated, but it is fabricated with no basis, and it is not permissible to attribute it to the Prophet ﷺ. No one should narrate a hadith from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ without verifying its authenticity, as he ﷺ said - as reported by Muslim (3): "Whoever lies about me intentionally, let him take his place in the Fire." And what a severe warning and definite intimidation this is.

## The Issue of Taking the Easier Option:

Ease in Sharia is a reality, not a goal. The Sharia is fundamentally designed to be easy, and ease is not a goal we seek and demand. The Prophet ﷺ always chose the easier option when given a choice, "whenever he was given a choice" if the situation was one of choice, but the principle in Sharia matters is not one of choice, rather one of following.

Thus, ease is "the reality of Sharia" and not "the goal of the law"; the goal is servitude and attaining the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted.

An important note here is the necessity of referring to trustworthy scholars, meaning not everyone who issues fatwas is qualified to do so. We often hear on social media and satellite channels people who are not among the scholars of jurisprudence issuing fatwas, and their fatwas are followed by those who follow them.

And what some ignorant people say: "Let the scholar take responsibility and come out safe!" is not reliable; for you - as mentioned before - do not do this in medical matters; so do not put it "on the responsibility of the doctor" and say, "I will come out safely!"

The truth that must be deeply ingrained in hearts is that the servant's duty is to strive to attain what Allah loves, and the scholars are merely means to this end.

If someone asks: What do you say about the saying of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: "Consult your heart" *[Musnad Ahmad 18006]*?

The answer is: This hadith - if authentic - pertains to hearts filled with piety and faith, not everyone is so; a heart filled with piety and faith, when matters are equal to it, should consult its heart, perhaps it will guide to the correct choice. Therefore, the matter is not open-ended *[refer to what Al-Qurtubi stated regarding this meaning in his book Al-Mufhim (4/492)]*.

## A Reflection on the Saying: "No Reproach in Matters of Disagreement"

This phrase is neither a verse nor a hadith nor a narration from any of the predecessors. It is mentioned by some scholars with an intent different from what its general understanding implies. Therefore, it must be detailed and not taken in a general sense, that there should be no reproach in any matter where disagreement has occurred; for disputable matters vary and are broadly of two types:

**The first category**: Matters in which disagreement is permissible, called: matters of Ijtihad (independent reasoning). Their criterion is that these are matters where evidence is obscure or apparently conflicting.

**The second category**: Matters in which disagreement is not permissible, opposite of the former, are those where disagreement has occurred despite there being clear, authentic evidence without any contradiction.

In these issues, disagreement is not considered valid. A scholar who makes a mistake in these areas is excused, God willing, because

they tried their best and did not intentionally make a mistake. However, those who come after should not continue the mistake, and we should not use the mistake as an argument against the religious law. In these matters, opposition is undoubtedly rejected because anything that contradicts clear religious evidence is false, and what is false must be rejected.

As for the first category (matters of Ijtihad), there should be no reproach in these, and the Companions, Successors, and Imams of guidance have differed in them without any of them reproaching or criticizing each other. An example of this is:

What Ibn Rajab, may Allah have mercy on him, said about Imam Ahmad: "Imam Ahmad, may Allah have mercy on him, was often presented with the statements of Ishaq and other Imams, and their reasoning for their opinions. He did not agree with their statements nor reproached them for their opinions and reasoning, even though he did not agree with all of it" *[Collection of his Letters (2/405)]*.

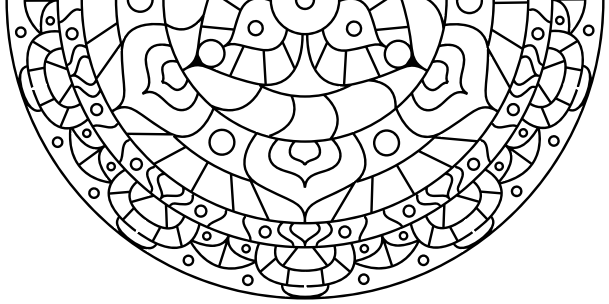
The reason for not rebuking in these matters is that one cannot conclusively determine the opponent's error, and reproach is only justified when the error is certain.

It should be noted that the reproach negated here refers to fault-finding, rebuke, harsh criticism, or the like. However, the door to advising, scholarly discussion, and debating with legal arguments remains open, and Allah knows best.

## *For further benefit:*

Those interested in benefiting are advised to refer to this beneficial treatise, and by Allah's success, they will find great benefit:

"Raf' al-Malam 'an al-A'immat al-'Alam" by Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him.



# Chapter Twenty: Our Need for Religion

A question of utmost importance: Is there a pressing need for us - individuals and societies - for the correct religion?

Is it a necessity in our existence? Or is it a secondary, supplementary matter, not of significant importance in this life, with priorities that are more important than it?

The importance of answering this question appears from two aspects:

**Firstly**, there are doubts raised among the youth who frequent social media and other platforms, where it is suggested to them that religion is an excess in our lives! And not something fundamental, but perhaps it is criticized through some channels; claiming it is an obstacle to progress and enjoying the pleasures of life.

It is no secret that secular currents are actively working today.

**Secondly**, by knowing the correct answer, we appreciate the great favor of Allah upon us for the guidance to this upright religion, and we become more attached to it and advocate for it.

## Religiosity is a Part of Fitrah:

Religiosity is an innate trait in humans, a deeply rooted instinct, just like other instincts such as the love of food, drink, and survival. Any deviation from the natural inclination towards religiosity is an aberration and deviation from the sound nature.

Interestingly, some have mentioned that the more precise definition of a human being - in the manner of logicians - is not "a speaking animal" but rather "a religious animal"; religiosity is the inherent characteristic that distinguishes them from others.

It is historically established that no city or human settlement has been without a temple where its people worshiped. Religion is a distinctive attribute of human nature, and our Lord, the Exalted, truthfully said: {So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. *[Adhere to]* the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created *[all]* people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most of the people do not know} *[Al-Rum: 30]*.

Religiosity in humans is not something fabricated, invented, or incidental; rather, it is a true, inherent nature. Here, I'd like to refer to a recent study that further enlightens us Muslims about what is already known. Professor Justin Barrett conducted this study along with his colleague Professor Roger Trigg - both of whom worked at the University of Oxford. They led a significant scientific project with fifty-seven researchers from twenty countries on the innateness of faith. Their research concluded that religiosity is a common reality in human nature across different societies. This study is well-known in English, and its details can be found online.

Professor Barrett, mentioned above, specializes in "Child Psychology" and has authored a famous book - also available in

Arabic translation - titled "Born Believers: The Science of Children's Religious Belief," which summarizes his scientific experiments over twenty years, indicating that children are born with an innate belief in the Creator, Exalted be He.

In this book, he refutes the misconception that children's faith is solely due to parental indoctrination, asserting that belief in Allah, the Exalted, is innate and not the result of indoctrination. He mentions some evidence and stories he encountered to support this.

In summary: Religiosity in humans is something original and universal; original in that it is deeply rooted within them from birth, and universal in that it is shared by all humanity.

Before proceeding, it is necessary to clarify that the religion we will discuss is Islam; the Islam with which Allah sent His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. {This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion} *[Al-Ma'idah: 3]*.

This is the true religion with its pure creed, just Sharia, comprehensive system, and sublime morals. As for the distorted and abrogated religions - such as Judaism and Christianity - or the pagan ones - such as Buddhism and Hinduism - they are not our subject of discussion in any aspect.

## Deniers of Religiosity Being a Part of Fitrah:

Today's arena is bustling with numerous secular currents that claim to dispense with religion, the most prominent and present of which today is the humanist movement. This movement claims that humanity has reached a high degree of knowledge and wisdom, becoming its own master and ruler of its own destiny, capable of managing its affairs and solving its problems without

needing anyone outside the realm of humanity. It is the individual who shapes their future and determines their fate, having reached a degree of wisdom in all fields! According to them, the human intellect is the center of sovereignty and must be given absolute priority.

This ideology believes that any submission by humans to a higher authority is, in essence, a diminishment of their status and a lowering from their high position; thus, their elevation can only be through self-independence, which, in reality, is a form of deifying humanity.

This direction gained strength in the 18th century, became more extreme in the 19th century, and has continued to our day. The essence of this doctrine is human autonomy, sufficiency from revelation, and that the human mind, in their claim, is an alternative to divine legislation.

The hypothetical question is: Has the humanistic tendency achieved what it claims in terms of elevating and ennobling humans?

The answer is definitely no; rather, it has plunged humans into a plethora of crises, diverted their lives into deep pits of problems, and surrounded their lives with a massive heap of difficulties. What else was to be expected?!

The human mind is too weak to be independent in knowledge and to encompass everything. These people have combined an exaggeration in glorifying humanity, not valuing Allah as He should be valued, and not magnifying Him as He should be magnified, Glorified and Exalted be He.

**The first sin committed by these people:** This direction towards atheism has violated the sanctity and distinction of humans, despite their claims of elevating their status! The reason is:

if the existence of Allah, the Exalted, is denied, then the existence of humans is denied! I mean: their true existence as designated by Allah, being honored creations distinguished from all other creations, is negated. {And We have certainly honored the children of Adam} *[Al-Isra: 70]*.

In accordance with this doctrine: humans are merely animals with no distinction or value, their status is the same as any other animal, or even as any worm, insect, or bacterium! They have the same rights as those insects because all living beings are equal in value and rights.

According to this doctrine: humans are just a part of matter, like any other of its parts, with no inherent moral or ethical substance. What value does a mass of material atoms that happened to exist by chance have?

Human life, as they imply, is no more valuable than the life of a monkey or an ant, nor does it hold greater value than a virus! To them, everything is the result of a blind chance, nothing more or less.

**The second sin**: Where is human elevation? Where are the noble sentiments? Where is righteous behavior? Where is faith? Where are morals? Where are values? None of this exists considering this humanist ideology.

Humans are merely animals, or if you prefer, just machines; existing without purpose, vanishing without aim, and there's nothing beyond this!

The humanist trend has slaughtered morals and values; because there's no existence of absolute morals without religion. Denying religion is a denial of absolute morals, hence, there's no difference between truth and falsehood, between integrity and betrayal, and

there's no existence of absolute values through which we can judge right from wrong; where is the standard that distinguishes the most heinous crime from the best moral?

**The third sin**: It has plunged humanity into pure nihilism, for if the true religion is denied, the meaning and purpose of life are also denied, and nothing has any meaning anymore!

Considering the humanist doctrine: There's no profound meaning in human life, we live, die, and perish, just like that!

Nihilism and absurdity enveloped in darkness and confusion, without hope or purpose, and humans - in the best scenario - live a life equated with animals, eating, drinking, seeking fulfillment, then dying, and everything ends. a harsh nihilism and a miserable maze!

In summary: Any current that champions the dispensation from religion fundamentally paves the way for the loss of humanity, essentially decreeing its death, because it demolishes every principle and annihilates every value.

In the light of these secular currents, humanity will transform into moral ruin, value loss, spiritual dryness, and societal fragmentation.

The glaring truth after all this: Faith in Allah and adherence to the true religion is the foundation. It is the basis for realizing the existential meaning of human life in this world.

## Human Need for the True Religion:

**First**, our need for religion is greater than our need for the sun and its light, indeed greater than our need for food and drink, even greater than our need for air.

Our primary and foremost need for religion lies in our quest for guidance and happiness, the greatest needs of all, which are intrinsically linked to religion and inseparable from it, a concept summarized by the verse of Allah: {Whoever follows My guidance will neither go astray *[in the world]* nor suffer *[in the Hereafter]*. And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life} *[Ta Ha: 123 - 124]*. Allah also said: {And when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve} *[Al-Baqarah: 38]*.

The true religion - the religion of Islam - is a transition from darkness to light, from disarray to tranquility, from confusion to certainty. {Alif, Lam, Ra. *[This is]* a Book which We have revealed to you, *[O Muhammad]*, that you might bring mankind out of darknesses into the light by permission of their Lord - to the path of the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy} *[Ibrahim: 1]*. {Certainly, did Allah confer *[great]* favor upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although they had been before in manifest error} *[Ali 'Imran: 164]*.

This great religion is all about righteousness and reform; it wards off evils and solves all problems. Without it, there is no hoped-for goal or sought-after end. This religion guides to what is most upright. It is truthful in its news and just in its judgments. It is the best of laws and the fairest of paths. We won't complete our humanity, achieve happiness, or enjoy stability except through adherence to this religion. The true religion signifies human existence; indeed, it signifies everything, and I repeat: everything.

**Second**, we need religion for our sense of worth and the meaning of our existence. The Islamic view of humanity is that it is a creation superior to others, chosen by Allah, honored, distinguished, and made the focus of divine commandments. Humans are a unique

creation, created for a specific purpose, and everything is subjugated for their sake. Preservation of their essentials is mandatory. In the shade of Islam, humans hold a lofty status, their existence has a noble meaning, and their life is more important than any other.

**Third**, our greatest need for this true religion is that it answers the big existential questions: Who created me? Why was I created? What comes after this existence? This issue haunts every rational being it occupies their mind, demanding a convincing answer to quench the soul's thirst for understanding the reality of existence: where from? To where? And why?

I won't hide from you, dear reader, that I posed these three existential questions to several disbelievers I met in various countries, and I don't need to tell you about the confusion, astonishment, and utter silence that served as their answer to my question! Mature, educated individuals stand perplexed before the most critical intellectual issue of their lives, while the youngest Muslim child can provide a robust answer without hesitation! Our religion has clarified everything for us, and matters are clear to our eyes and hearts:

**The first question**: Who created me? The true religion has clarified knowledge of the Creator, Blessed be He, and His right over us.

**The second question**: Why was I created? The true religion has answered this question, elucidating the wisdom behind our existence, {And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me} *[Al-Dhariyat: 56]*. It provided us with psychological security.

This answer has given life a purpose and value. It has liberated the mind from superstitions.

**The third question**: What comes after this existence? The true religion clarified the fate, the hereafter, the abode of recompense, thus instilling patience in this life, granting us tranquility, infusing hope in our souls, and motivating us to strive harder. It established in us a self-monitoring that pushes towards goodness and warns against evil.

**Fourth**, we need this religion to satisfy the intellect's thirst; the mind aspires to understand everything around it, to know the unseen, both past and future. This religion fulfills this aspiration, satisfies this desire, and provides the correct explanation for all of it. It offers complete answers to everything humans yearn to know and benefits from knowing. The true religion is essential nourishment for the development and guidance of the mind towards correct thinking, and modern science cannot aid in this because these matters are not subject to experimentation.

**Fifth**, we need religion to honor the intellect and keep it away from trivialities, superstitions, and myths. It has directed it towards the worship of Allah, the Great, the Worthy of worship, not towards the worship of trees, stones, cows, and mice! Allah Almighty has honored humans with this religion, opening the horizons of contemplation and reflection on the recited verses and the observed signs.

**Sixth**, our need for religion is urgent to feed us with noble emotions such as love, modesty, humility, forgiveness, and so forth. No matter where you look, you will only find these in their ideal form in this true religion.

**Seventh**, our need for religion is urgent in refining the soul, teaching it to resist false impulses and corrupt desires, as well as reining in its tumult in moments of joy and anger, and providing it with the most effective means to combat hesitation and despair.

**Eighth**, we need this religion to treat all psychological illnesses, including anxiety, despair, fear, obsessive-compulsive disorder, doubt, and suspicion. The world groans under their torment, searching for a cure, and the effective "prescription" – if the perplexed could only see – is found in Islam!

**Ninth**, we need this religion to give the soul its peace, tranquility, and stability. The Muslim who practices Islam knows that everything is from Allah, so they are content in both ease and hardship. If afflicted with a trial and they have a legitimate way to alleviate it, they do not despair; if there's no way out, they do not panic.

**Tenth**, we need this religion as spiritual nourishment; religion is the food, medicine, comfort, and paradise of the soul. Worship and remembrance bring the heart closer to the Lord, granting it peace and pleasure. This nourishment gives it strength, liberating it from the shackles of humiliation and cowardice, and instilling in its dignity, pride, and a refusal to submit to anything but Allah.

**Eleventh**, we need this religion to face life's difficulties and overcome obstacles. Faith in Allah's lordship, in destiny, and in Allah's names and attributes is a mighty weapon for the believer, against which no challenge in life can stand, no matter its difficulty.

**Twelfth**, we need this righteous religion to establish a fair balance between the demands of the soul and the body, between working in this world and for the hereafter, {But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and *[yet]*, do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allah has done good to you. And desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters}.

**Thirteenth**, we need this religion to properly care for our bodies, in terms of cleanliness, purity, and strength. This religion has

forbidden all that is harmful, warned against the causes of diseases, called for treatment, urged moderation in eating and drinking, opened the door to lawful concessions, and regulated instincts.

**Fourteenth**, we need this religion to have a correct understanding of ourselves and the universe around us.

**Fifteenth**, we need this religion for guidance. We found it directs us towards all that is beneficial and warns us against all that is harmful, instructing us to prioritize what has a preponderance of benefit and to avoid what has a preponderance of harm.

**Sixteen**, we need this religion because we are inherently weak and in need of a refuge to resort to, a support to rely on. The true religion – belief in Allah, worship, and submission to Him, and finding solace in Him – provides strength in weakness, hope in despair, assurance in fear, and patience in adversity.

**Seventeenth**, we need this true religion because it is the source of values, manners, conduct, and morals. From it, humans derive their values and principles, and without it, life turns into a grim jungle.

**Eighteenth**, we need this religion because we need a higher purpose in life to strive for and pursue diligently, to wake and sleep with it never leaving the sphere of our concern. Without it, meaning vanishes, and the goal disappears, darkening life.

**Nineteenth**, if this true religion did nothing else but instill in us faith in predestination, which illuminates life, dispels its gloom and darkness from our eyes, and plants hope and patience within us, that would be enough. How beautiful it is to live life with this magnificent charter before our eyes and in the core of our hearts: {No disaster strikes upon the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register before We bring it into being - indeed that, for

Allah, is easy - In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult *[in pride]* over what He has given you. And Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful -} *[Al-Hadid: 22 - 23]*.

**Twentieth**: We need this religion because the needs of societies are no less than the needs of individuals. We need unity and harmony, and the true religion is what unifies scattered hearts and divergent desires. We need this righteous religion to establish strong bonds among its members, especially spiritual and moral bonds such as compassion, empathy, mutual support, love, cooperation, and sincere advice. A virtuous society cannot exist without this, and it cannot be established except through the righteous religion.

Regarding establishing strong bonds within the small community—the family—there is much to say. No family can do without the legislation of the true religion in all its affairs, from the rights of the spouses, raising children, provision, mutual support, inheritance, wills, and more.

**Twenty-first**: We need this religion because we need regulations governing the relationships among all individuals from all levels of society, defining duties and rights, and then the society should embrace them with an internal drive and personal conscience. This is something that all systems and laws cannot provide.

**Twenty-second**: We need this religion because we need a unified, cohesive society with strong bonds, preserving its components, and protecting it from decay and dissolution.

**Twenty-third**: We need justice that puts things in their proper place and dispels the darkness of injustice, which is what the true religion encompasses.

**Twenty-fourth**: We need religion to spread security. The true religion is the greatest authority and the biggest deterrent, and

no other authority or force can replace it. Religion is an internal, personal overseer. A sincere believer feels Allah always sees him, in secret and openly, hence, he refrains from taking any step towards deceit, harm, injustice, or aggression.

## The Benefits Enjoyed by Those Who Adhere to the Religion of Islam

We will not reach the pinnacle of enjoying this great gift bestowed upon us by Allah, Almighty, this righteous religion, except by six conditions:

**The first condition**: That we learn it comprehensively and in detail, in creed and worship, in laws and morals. Muslims who do not know their religion accurately and in detail are incomplete Muslims.

**The second condition**: That we believe in all that this righteous religion brings, not accepting some parts and leaving others, {O you who have believed, enter Islam completely *[and perfectly]*} *[Al-Baqarah: 208]*.

**The third condition**: That we strive to apply it and hold ourselves to its laws as much as possible.

**The fourth condition**: That we beware of everything that opposes it or weakens adherence to it, such as polytheism, disbelief, innovations, and detestable acts. Then, we will be in overwhelming happiness with this religion, indeed, in an expedited paradise.

**The fifth condition**: That we give it priority and precedence in our lives and times, and in our scale of concerns. Religion comes first, and everything else follows.

**The sixth condition**: That we appreciate this blessing and give thanks for it truly with the heart, tongue, and limbs.

One way to appreciate this blessing is to reflect on the state of those who lack it or those who were without it but then were granted it by Allah, Almighty - those who embraced Islam after disbelief. Reflect on their past and present, and you will realize that you are in a blessing unmatched by any other.

One of the significant issues today is that some of the Muslim youth do not feel this great blessing that Allah has granted us:

***Like a camel in the desert dying of thirst***

***while water is carried on its back.***

Do you know what it means to be a Muslim? It means everything. It means you are the winner, the happy one, the content and certain, the dignified. Your vision is clear, your heart is pure, your spirit is strong, your soul is at peace. You have grasped happiness in its entirety, hope, joy, and salvation - all which Allah, Almighty, has guided you to.

And with all this, you have missed nothing in this life; rather, your life is more radiant, optimistic, and organized. And if you remain steadfast in it until you leave this world, you have won both happiness and success in both abodes, the immediate and the hereafter.

**Finally**: Let us know that it is the Sunnah of Allah, Almighty, in His creation, that if a blessing is not thanked, it is replaced with its opposite. The blessing of security, if not appreciated, is replaced with fear; the blessing of provision, if not thanked, is replaced with hunger; and likewise, the blessing of religion, if not appreciated, is replaced with disbelief {And if you turn away, He will replace you with another people; then they will not be the likes of you} *[Muhammad: 38]*.

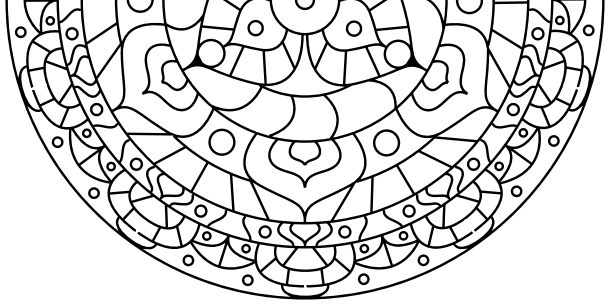
Let us know that Islam is more honorable than those who belong to it. If it does not find people who recognize the value of Allah's blessing upon them, who cling tightly to it with their molar teeth, and see it as a bounty Allah has stored for them; it will depart from them to others, {Allah will bring forth *[in place of them]* a people He will love and who will love Him} *[Al-Ma'idah: 54]*.

## *For further benefit*

I recommend to you, dear reader, two things:

1. Reading a small booklet I have previously recommended and repeat my recommendation for because it is important. Its title is "al-Din al-Sahih Yahull Jami' al-Mashakil", by Shaikh Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him.

2. I hope the esteemed reader would review Chapter Seven of this book; it discusses the sixth proof of the Prophet's prophecy, which is the perfection of the Sharia and its virtues. By combining what is mentioned in this chapter with that one, the benefit will increase and become complete, by the will of Allah.



# Chapter Twenty-One: The Rights of the Sunnah Upon the Ummah

In our discussion, "Sunnah" refers to everything attributed to the Prophet ﷺ in terms of sayings, actions, approvals, or characteristics. Thus, it is synonymous with Hadith.

We do not mean the various other uses of the term "Sunnah," such as Sunnah meaning the recommended acts, or Sunnah as a term used by scholars of belief to refer to creed.

## Benefits of Following the Sunnah

Allah, the Exalted, sent His beloved servant Muhammad ﷺ as a messenger to people, making him a guide to His paradises. The Prophet ﷺ conveyed Allah's messages and clarified the meanings of His verses. Adhering to his Sunnah embodies perfect safety and the essence of honor.

Those who adhere to the Sunnah are protected, and those who oppose it will have regrets; it is a fortified stronghold and a steadfast pillar. Those who hold onto it will prosper, and those who

seek against it will perish. Those clinging to it are the people of happiness in the hereafter and are envied among people in this life.

The fruits of following him ﷺ are tremendous. Whoever follows him, Allah will suffice, guide, assist, and provide for him.

Whoever wishes to be among the winners should adhere to the Sunnah: {And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, fears Allah, and is dutiful to Him, they are the successful ones} *[Al-Nur: 52]*.

Whoever desires Allah's mercy should follow the Sunnah: {And obey Allah and the Messenger that you may obtain mercy} *[Ali 'Imran: 132]*.

Whoever seeks guidance and success should follow the Sunnah: {And if you obey him, you will be guided}, {And follow him that you may be guided} *[Al-A'raf: 158]*.

Whoever aims to reach the straight path should follow the Sunnah: {And indeed, you guide to a straight path} *[Al-Mu'minun: 73]*.

Whoever seeks salvation and Paradise should adhere to the Sunnah. The Prophet ﷺ said, "All my Ummah will enter Paradise except those who refuse." They said, "O Messenger of Allah, who will refuse?" He replied, "Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys me has indeed refused" *[Bukhari 7280]*.

Malik, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The Sunnah is like Noah's Ark. Whoever embarks on it is saved, and whoever stays behind is drowned." *[Dhamm al-Kalam by al-Harawi (5/81)]*.

Whoever desires Allah's love should hasten to obey His Messenger ﷺ {Say, "If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your sins"} *[Ali 'Imran: 31]*.

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, in his book "Madarij al-Salikin" (3/39), stated, "Allah will not love you unless

you follow His beloved ﷺ outwardly and inwardly, believe in his news, obey his command, answer his call, prefer him willingly, and die to the judgment of others by his judgment, and to the love of others from the creation by his love, and to the obedience of others by his obedience. If not, do not tire yourself!"

These are some of the fruits of following the Sunnah and adhering to it, though the subject warrants much more discussion.

It's important to clarify that when we speak about the benefits of adhering to the Sunnah, we do not mean adhering to the Sunnah to the exclusion of the Quran. The Quran and Sunnah are inseparable; both are revelations from Allah. Thus, what is meant is adhering to the Sunnah along with the Quran.

## Rights of the Sunnah Upon the Ummah

**Firstly**: Love for It. Among the greatest rights of the Sunnah upon us, the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ, is the love for everything attributed to the Prophet ﷺ. It is obligatory to love every Sunnah he established, as this is a branch of your sincere love for him. He ﷺ said, "None of you truly believes until I am more beloved to him than his child, his father, and all people" *[Bukhari 15, Muslim 44]*. Loving the Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah is a sign of loving him. To test your love for the Prophet ﷺ, see if you love everything related to him; if you do, rejoice and be at ease. The Companions, those true lovers of the Prophet ﷺ and his Sunnah, even loved the ordinary things he did or liked. Anas reported that a tailor invited the Prophet ﷺ to some food, who then went after the pieces of pumpkin around the plate, making Anas love pumpkin ever since *[Bukhari 2092, Muslim 2041]*.

Be warned against detesting anything from the Sunnah, as some may do due to it conflicting with their desires, not realizing they've

fallen into a disastrous pit. Scholars agree that hating anything from the Sunnah, even if one acts upon it, is disbelief, as Allah says, {That is because they disliked what Allah revealed, so He rendered their deeds worthless} *[Muhammad: 9]*.

Condition yourself to love the Sunnah, even if you fall short in following it. You must love and respect it as a matter of creed. For example, growing the beard is instructed by the Sunnah; those who shave are deficient and sinful, yet they must still love and appreciate the act of growing the beard when they see others doing it, as it is the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. The problem arises when habitual negligence in following the Sunnah breeds contempt for it, a dangerous state!

Similarly, the Sunnah mandates the hijab for women. Thus, a woman who displays her beauty in public is deficient and disobedient. Yet, it is obligatory for her to love and honor the hijab because it is part of the Sunnah. The problem arises when habitual negligence in following the Prophetic traditions becomes second nature, possibly leading, Allah forbid, to disdain for them and discomfort at their sight—this is where danger lies.

Should you fall short in following the Sunnah, be wary of compounding this sin with something far greater that could jeopardize your faith: detesting it.

**Secondly**: Honoring and venerating the Sunnah, and viewing it with respect and esteem, is a right the Sunnah holds over us, the Muslim community. The Sunnah is dignified because it is a revelation from Allah; it is esteemed because it is the guidance of the trustworthy Messenger ﷺ. Honoring the Sunnah stems from honoring its bearer ﷺ, as it is obligatory to revere and venerate him, treating him with the honor and respect befitting him ﷺ.

Our Lord, exalted be He, said: {So that you may believe in Allah and His Messenger and honor him and respect him} *[Al-Fath: 9]*. Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah remarked, "If animals and inanimate objects revere the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, we are more deserving of doing so." (al-Radd ʻala al-Bakri: 1/285).

Therefore, when a confirmed Sunnah reaches you, honor it in yourself, and when you hear his sayings, hold them in high regard. A delicate point to mention here is Imam Hammad bin Zaid's statement regarding Allah's verse: {Do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet} *[Al-Hujurat: 2]*, where he said, {I view raising one's voice over his after his death as equivalent to raising it during his life. When his hadith is recited, you must listen to it as you listen to the Quran." *[Siyar A'lam an-Nubala' 7/460]*.

Opposing this right is mocking and ridiculing the Sunnah; such vulgarity and sin are immense. Muslims unanimously agree that whoever mocks anything from the Prophet's Sunnah or sayings has apostatized from Allah's religion, as Allah says: {And if you ask them, they will surely say, "We were only conversing and playing". Say, "Is it Allah and His verses and His Messenger that you were mocking? Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after your belief"} *[Al-Tawbah: 65 - 66]*.

So-called "jokes" that touch upon the Sunnah or hadiths, or hover around them, plunge their author into ruin. A joke you laugh at or make others laugh with could doom you to Allah's wrath and curse without you realizing. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Indeed, a servant might speak a word without realizing its implications, and for that, he would plunge into Hellfire, farther than the distance between the East and the West." *[Agreed upon by Bukhari and Muslim]*. The advice is clear: if jesting reaches matters related to religion, guard your tongue, do not sit with those who indulge in such talk, and beware of losing your faith.

**Thirdly**: Believe that the Sunnah represents complete guidance, enlightenment, correctness, and the pinnacle of perfection, from which the truth cannot deviate. The Prophet ﷺ said, "The best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad ﷺ," and Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "The most perfect guidance is the guidance of Muhammad ﷺ." There's no guidance except by following the Quran and Sunnah; seeking it elsewhere will surely lead to astray and fall into whims. Allah says, {If they do not respond to you, then know that they only follow their own desires. And who is more astray than one who follows his desire without guidance from Allah? Indeed, Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people} *[Al-Qassas: 50]*. Thus, there are only two paths: responding to the Prophet ﷺ or following whims.

It's astonishing to see a young Muslim saying, "I'm confused, I don't know where the truth and correctness are!" while possibly seeking them in ancient or modern philosophy, Eastern or Western methodologies, or innovative practices, with the Quran and Sunnah right in front of him!

And the poet's words ring true:

***Among the wonders, a multitude there lies,***

***the cure so near, yet unreachable it flies.***

***Like camels in the desert dying of thirst,***

***while on their backs, water carried—oh, the irony first.***

Don't exhaust yourself or get perplexed; the Book and the Sunnah are before you; they contain the remedy, healing, and contentment.

**Fourthly**: Complete submission to it and prioritizing it above everything else is required. The Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ holds

a significant right over Muslims: absolute submission. When it reaches one, he should surrender, comply, and embrace it without hesitation or skepticism, discarding all else in its favor. This is an obligation, not a choice. Allah Almighty says, {No, by your Lord, they will not *[truly]* believe until they make you, *[O Muhammad]*, judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in *[full, willing]* submission} *[Al-Nisa: 65]*. Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, may Allah have mercy on him, stated: "No one's opinion is valid against a Sunnah established by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ." (Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm wa Fadlihi: 1/ 781).

And Imam Al-Shafi'i, may Allah have mercy on him, affirmed: "The Muslims unanimously agree that whoever finds a Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ must not leave it for anyone's word." (I'lam al-Muwaqqi'in 2/ 11).

A fine point worth mentioning is that a man questioned Abdullah ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with both, about the prayer at Mina, specifically why it was shortened. He asked, "Have you heard of Muhammad ﷺ?" The man replied, "Yes, I have believed in him!" Ibn Umar then stated, "He used to pray two rak'ahs at Mina" (al-Musnad: 5240).

This exemplifies how submission and adherence should be! Knowing that the Prophet ﷺ did something suffices; thereafter, you have no option but to emulate his action.

Opposing this right includes resisting the Sunnah, being arrogant about it, objecting to it, or prioritizing something else over it. Regrettably, this is all too common in recent times. Many people, when presented with the Sunnah, subject it to their clouded intellect or muster weak excuses to neglect it. Woe to every intellect that scrutinizes the decree of the Messenger of Allah

ﷺ. When a forsaken Sunnah is mentioned, they say, "But logic contradicts this!" or "This contradicts my madhhab!" or "Times have changed!" You might even find some engaging in social media polls about matters firmly established in the Sunnah: agreeing or disagreeing as if rejecting the Sunnah is a matter of choice!

When a man asked Imam Al-Shafi'i about a matter and was informed that the Prophet ﷺ had said something regarding it, he queried, "Do you advocate for this too?" Al-Shafi'i, visibly shaken and pale, exclaimed, "Woe to you! How could the earth bear me, and how could the sky shade me if I narrate something from the Messenger of Allah and do not act upon it? Yes, indeed, on my head and eyes" (Manaqib al-Shafi'i li al-Bayhaqi 1/ 475).

On another occasion, when Al-Shafi'i was asked about a matter to which he had given an answer based on the Prophet's saying, and was then asked if he concurs with that, he retorted, "Do you see a Zunnar (a belt worn by Christians) around my waist? Do you think I have just emerged from a church? I tell you the Prophet ﷺ said, and you ask if I agree with it? I narrate from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and wouldn't follow it?!" (Manaqib al-Shafi'i li al-Bayhaqi 1/ 475).

This is the true Muslim stance: submission and compliance. Our Lord says, {It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should *[thereafter]* have any choice about their affair} *[Al-Ahzab: 36]*.

Among the gravest dangers to a person's religion is to meet a verse or hadith with objection or rejection. This is a serious matter not to be taken lightly, as it pertains to the foundation of the religion. Anyone who rejects a hadith and refuses to accept it is on the brink of destruction. Those who oppose the Sunnah and persist in deviating from its path endanger themselves significantly; they risk

severe consequences, including the painful punishment warned by Allah Almighty: {So let those beware who dissent from the Prophet's order, lest Fitnah strike them or a painful punishment} *[Al-Nur: 63]*.

And Allah says, {And whoever opposes the Messenger after guidance has become clear to him and follows other than the way of the believers—we will give him what he has taken and drive him into Hell, an evil destination} *[Al-Nisa: 115]*.

Such a person, if unrepentant, will regret his fate on the Day of Judgment, finding himself among those whom Allah describes: {And [mention, O Muhammad], the Day the wrongdoer will bite on his hands *[in regret]* he will say, "Oh, I wish I had taken with the Messenger a way"} *[Al-Furqan: 27]*.

Besides, there might be worldly punishments before the hereafter. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Humiliation and disgrace are for the one who opposes my command." (al-Musnad: 5240).

Contemplate this astonishing event: a man was eating with his left hand when the Prophet ﷺ told him, "Eat with your right hand." The man arrogantly claimed he could not, to which the Prophet responded, "May you never be able to!" His hand was then paralyzed—a severe admonition (Muslim: 2021).

**Fifthly**, immediate response without hesitation and precise implementation. Muslims must promptly respond to the Sunnah: obeying its commands, abstaining from its prohibitions, and believing its reports. This is the essence of faith in the Prophet ﷺ. Allah commands, {Obey Allah and the Messenger if you are believers} *[Al-Anfal: 1]*, and {O you who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life} *[Al-Anfal: 24]*. Notice the phrase {that which gives you life}, clearly indicating that true life is under the Sunnah's shadow.

True life is the life of the heart, which exists only in obedience to the Prophet ﷺ. Its opposite is the heart's death. Reflecting on the matter, one finds that divine and prophetic commands are described as covenants, commandments, mercy, healing, light, guidance, and life.

Reflecting deeply, one finds that texts have described divine and prophetic commands as covenants, commandments, mercy, healing, light, guidance, and life.

Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, beautifully said, "For him ﷺ, there are two immense reservoirs: one in this world, which is his Sunnah and what he brought, and another in the Hereafter. Those who drink from this worldly reservoir will be the drinkers at his reservoir in the Hereafter; there will be those who drink, those who are deprived, those who consider it insufficient, and those who consider it abundant... Whoever is thirsty for his Sunnah in this world and does not partake in it will be thirstier and more parched in the Hereafter" *[Ijtima' al-Juyush al-Islamiyyah, 85]*.

Let those who are negligent and lazy in obeying the noble Prophet ﷺ be warned; their life is deficient and dark!

It's a sign of utter misguidance, indeed of its absence, for someone to say, "Prophetic commands are burdensome and difficult"! By Allah, they are the delight of the eyes and the life of hearts. It's sheer ignorance and vile to describe them thus, as if one is unaware that Shariah commands are not arbitrary, nor does their Lord need them. Rather, they are intended for the servant's benefit, mercy, and eternal happiness.

**Sixthly**, sufficing with it and caution against adding to it.

This includes every innovation and invention in religion; for the innovator implies: the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ is insufficient;

thus, I will add to it! Little does the poor soul realize that he gains nothing but toil and labor, and his innovated deed is rejected. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever performs an action which is not in accordance with our matter, will have it rejected" *[Agreed upon by Bukhari and Muslim]*. Rejection means it is turned back.

Little does the poor soul know that even if the innovation appears attractive, it is the worst of matters and the most despicable; as in Sahih Muslim, the Prophet ﷺ said, "The worst of matters are those that are newly invented, and every innovation is misguidance."

Innovation, then, is misguidance, not guidance, even if it seems appealing. Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with them both, said, "Every innovation is misguidance, even if people see it as good" *[Al-Ibanah by Ibn Battah, 1/339]*.

It's apt here to mention two significant narrations that demonstrate the grave mistake of those not content with the Sunnah and seek beyond it:

**The first narration**: is about Sa'id ibn Musayyib, the eminent Tabi'i, may Allah have mercy on him; he saw a man praying repeatedly after dawn and advised him against it. When the man retorted, "Will Allah punish me for praying?" Sa'id replied, "No, but He will punish you for going against the Sunnah!" *[Musannaf Abd al-Razzaq, 3/52]*.

This story teaches us that the Prophet ﷺ only prayed two rak'ahs after the dawn call to prayer. Isn't it sufficient for a Muslim to follow him ﷺ in that? Or does he aspire, Allah forbid, to be more knowledgeable, more pious, or more fearful of Allah than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?

True adherence to the Sunnah requires stopping at its limits without adding to it.

**The second narration:** involves Imam Malik ibn Anas, the Imam of Dar al-Hijra, may Allah have mercy on him. A man approached him and asked, "O Abu Abdullah, from where should I enter ihram?" He replied, "From Dhul-Hulaifah, where the Prophet ﷺ entered ihram." The man expressed a desire to enter ihram from the mosque instead. Imam Malik advised against it. The man persisted, saying he wished to do so from near the Prophet's ﷺ grave. Again, Imam Malik advised against it, fearing fitnah (trial) for him. The man questioned, "What kind of fitnah is this? It's just a few extra miles!" Imam Malik responded, "What greater Fitnah is there than thinking you've found a virtue that the Prophet ﷺ missed?!" He then recited the verse: {So let those beware who dissent from the Prophet's order, lest Fitnah strike them or a painful punishment} *[Al-Nur: 63] [Al-I'tisam 1/174]*.

**Seventhly**: Striving to learn it.

A Muslim's duty towards the Sunnah includes trying to learn it. If the Sunnah holds a high place in your heart, if you love, honor it, and believe it's your path to Paradise, why then falter in learning it and not delve deeply into its knowledge? You might read everything except the books of Sunnah! Such neglect is inexcusable. You must strive to learn it and immerse yourself in its teachings. Aim to learn a new hadith every day, pick up a book of authentic hadiths, and commit to reading and learning. Take "Riyad as-Salihin," "A Summary of Sahih Al-Bukhari," or "A Summary of Sahih Muslim," and read. Most hadiths are, thankfully, clear and understandable. If you find something confusing, ask about it. I assure you, by Allah's will, you will find immense happiness and a positive impact on your heart and life from this knowledge.

**Eighthly**: Proper understanding without exaggeration or negligence.

You must understand the Sunnah correctly after verifying its authenticity from the Prophet ﷺ. It's crucial because many attribute hadiths and practices to him ﷺ that are not authentic, which is forbidden. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever speaks about me with what is false, is one of the liars" *[Muslim in the introduction of his Sahih 1/8]*. The first step is to ensure the accuracy of attributing the hadith to the Prophet ﷺ, then to comprehend it as the righteous predecessors and Islamic scholars, who followed their path, did. It's not for personal interpretation or twisting it to suit one's desires, as those with little good in them do. Consulting reputable scholars who are knowledgeable about the Sunnah, its jurisprudence, and its principles and objectives is crucial for verifying authenticity and understanding.

**Ninthly**: Conveying it to others, teaching it to those who are able, and calling to it.

If you hear an authentic hadith, make sure to spread it so that knowledge of it proliferates and action upon it increases. You'll share in the reward of those who act upon it. The Prophet ﷺ said, "May Allah brighten a man who hears something from us and communicates it to others exactly as he has heard it, for it may be that the receiver of knowledge understands it better than the one who heard it" *[Tirmidhi 2657]*. Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, beautifully stated, "Conveying his ﷺ Sunnah to the ummah is more virtuous than delivering arrows to the enemy's chests" *[Jalaa' al-Afham, 415]*.

**Tenthly and finally**: Defending it, feeling anger for it, and being zealous about it.

This stems from a genuine respect and love for it. A Muslim who truly honors and loves the Sunnah cannot bear to see or hear of anyone violating its sanctity, transgressing its limits, or

daring against it. He must do what he can, wisely, to refute the transgressors' falsehoods.

Today, unfortunately, we live in a time where attacks against the Sunnah have increased, and those of insignificant status have dared to aim their filthy arrows towards it. The duty of Muslims, both rulers and the ruled, towards this reality is significant. Whoever supports the Sunnah should rejoice; for he will have a share in Allah's special companionship, which entails His support and endorsement. Allah says: {If you do not aid him (the Prophet) - Allah has already aided him when those who disbelieved had driven him out *[of Makkah]* as one of two, when they were in the cave and he said to his companion, "Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us"} *[Al-Tawbah: 40]*. Supporting the Messenger ﷺ today means supporting his religion and his Sunnah.

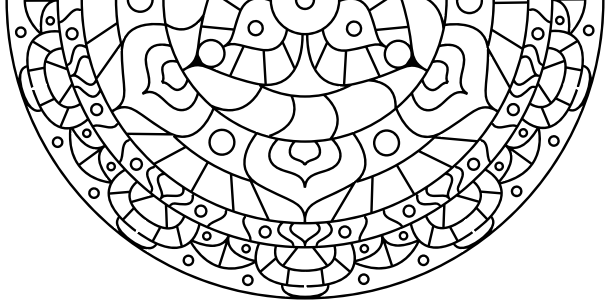
## In conclusion...

Know that the greatest victory for the Sunnah and the most effective rebuttal to its enemies is to first support the Sunnah within ourselves. This means correcting our relationship with it, reorganizing our lives in its light, raising our children upon it, and teaching it to those around us. If we claim to be from the people of the Sunnah, we must truly belong to it, not just in name. Every step in our life, every movement and stillness, has a noble prophetic guidance, so let us learn and apply. This requires seeking help from Allah, then striving against oneself to learn, apply, and spread it among the people. Success comes to those whom Allah wills!

*For further benefit*

I recommend reading: Explanation of Riyad as-Salihin by Shaikh Ibn Uthaymin, may Allah have mercy on him. Ensure

to acquire this book; if you do, you have indeed secured a great treasure and a precious catch. You will be exposed to a significant amount of the prophetic Sunnah, explained by a trusted scholar in an accessible manner.



# Chapter Twenty-Two: The Authority of the Sunnah

Discussing this topic is of paramount importance these days as there are concentrated, systematic, and varied campaigns targeting the Prophetic Sunnah, casting doubts among Muslims about it. The matter is grave because this unjust campaign touches the core and foundation of Islam; after all, what is Islam but what is conveyed in the Quran and the Sunnah? Thus, attacking the Sunnah is an assault at the very heart of Islam.

Moreover, denying or doubting the Sunnah is a bridge to atheism and apostasy. Therefore, the efforts of atheists and secularists to tarnish the Sunnah in the eyes of Muslim youth are relentless; for if its sanctity is undermined in their hearts, luring them into the abyss of atheism becomes easier.

Thus, under no circumstances should we take lightly the defense against these attacks on the sayings of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Instead, we must confront it firmly; it is a defense of the religion and fulfilling the right of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and countering a forceful atheistic tendency.

I ring the alarm bell here; the enemies of the Sunnah and those who assail the prophetic traditions are working tirelessly today, with their means, accounts, platforms, publications, and satellite channels. Their misconceptions are seeping among the general Muslim populace, even sweeping away some of our youth and elders. This is a reality, not an exaggeration, so let the righteous be wary, the reformers attentive, and all Muslims vigilant.

## The Authority of the Prophetic Sunnah and the Ruling on Denying It

It is well-known as a matter of religious necessity that the Prophetic Sunnah—whether in words, actions, or approvals—has always been and will always be an independent authority. It must be resolved, referred to, adhered to, and acted upon without hesitation in its obedience. It establishes beliefs and rulings just as the Quran does, and it must be accepted even if not mentioned in the Quran. The Prophet ﷺ said regarding its authority: "I have been given the Scripture and something like it along with it." Reported by Ahmad (17173).

The Sunnah explains and interprets the Quran and details what is summarized within it. This statement is unanimously agreed upon by the entire nation, with only heretics who have left the Muslim community dissenting, following a path other than that of the believers.

The condition of these forsaken individuals is like that of someone circling a lofty mountain, attempting to remove it by carrying away small stones, or like someone trying to empty the ocean with his hands. The mountain will remain a mountain, the sea a sea, and the Sunnah will remain honored, with the forsaken left in disappointment.

In summary, the Quran and the Sunnah are inseparable twins, foundational and concurrent. Denying one of them is tantamount to denying the other, considered disbelief, deviation, and an exit from the fold of Islam by the consensus of scholars. Suyuti beautifully said in his elegant treatise "Miftah al-Jannah fi Ihtijaj bi al-Sunnah (5)": "Know, may Allah have mercy on you, that whoever denies the prophetic tradition—whether in words or actions, with its known conditions in principles—as a proof, has committed disbelief and exited the fold of Islam, will be resurrected among Jews and Christians, or with whomever Allah wills among the factions of disbelievers."

Ibn Hazm said in his book Al-Ihkam (2/80): "If a person were to say: 'We take only what we find in the Quran,' he would be considered a disbeliever by the consensus of the nation."

## Types of Those Who Challenge the Authority of the Prophetic Sunnah

Denial and criticism of the Sunnah is an old, yet modern belief adopted by the misguided from various backgrounds.

From ancient times, sects like the Kharijites, the Mu'tazilites, and the Batinites denied significant portions of the Sunnah for various pretexts.

In more recent times, atheists who deny the existence of Allah Almighty, as well as deists who deny prophethood, have emerged.

Among them are non-Muslims from various religions, such as Jews and Christians, under the guise of Orientalism or its like.

There are also the Qadianis and Baha'is, and their likes.

There are enemies of the Companions who reject the Sunnah entirely, falsely claiming that its narrators, the Companions, were disbelievers, which is far from the truth.

There are those who call themselves "Quranists," claiming to suffice with the Quran and deeming the Sunnah unnecessary.

Additionally, there are individuals from various ideological backgrounds—modernist, rationalist, secular, or liberal—or those influenced by them, who limit the authority of the Sunnah, conceding only parts related to worship (reluctantly) and rejecting parts related to transactions, penalties, etc., bending under the dominance of Western thought, before which they are utterly defeated.

Each of these groups has its unique arguments or shares them with others, and each requires a specific discussion.

Allah, the Exalted, truthfully says: {And thus We have made for every prophet an enemy - devils from mankind and jinn, inspiring to one another decorative speech in delusion. But if your Lord had willed, they would not have done it, so leave them and that which they invent} *[Al-An'am: 112]*.

In any case, the emergence of these deniers only strengthens our faith as Muslims in the truthfulness of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the authenticity of his Sunnah. Their appearance is one of the signs of his Sunnah, as he ﷺ informed us about the emergence of this tendency within the nation, saying: "Perhaps a man will reach a hadith from me while he is reclining on his couch and say, 'Between us and you is the Book of Allah: what we find in it to be permissible, we permit, and what we find to be prohibited, we forbid.' Verily, what the Messenger of Allah has forbidden is like what Allah has forbidden." Reported by Tirmidhi (2664), Abu Dawood (4604), and others.

## The Quranist Sect

The Quranists are a misguided group that claims affiliation with Islam, arguing that the Quran alone suffices as the sole source of legislation and rejecting the prophetic traditions, claiming independence from them. This denial of the Sunnah began early, led by various misguided groups, varying from complete denial to partial rejection based on different pretexts. This deviant trend continued among various misguided groups until the early 20th century when a group emerged in the Indian subcontinent, supported by the British occupation, known as "the Quranists" or "People of the Quran." They claimed to discard all hadiths, relying solely on the Quran, even alleging that following the Sunnah was polytheistic and an impediment to the community's progress. They actively spread their doubts through associations, magazines, publications, and media channels. Today, this trend of undermining and claiming independence from the Sunnah has spread in various directions and countries, with active efforts to promote their misguidance online and through satellite channels.

## Their main views include:

1. Rejecting all prophetic hadiths outright and claiming to follow only the Quran.
2. Claiming the Prophet ﷺ was fallible in delivering Islam.
3. Denying or misinterpreting many Islamic doctrines, such as the afterlife and intercession, or the realities of Heaven and Hell.
4. Denying Shariah-prescribed penalties and many other rulings or interpreting them in absurd ways.
5. Denying rituals not mentioned in the Quran, such as the call to prayer and wiping over leather socks, and tampering with

other acts of worship like prayer, zakat, and fasting to suit their whims, in ways unknown to Muslims.

6. Interpreting the Quran according to their desires, ignoring hadiths and the companions' traditions.

Regarding the ruling on the Quranists: Anyone who rejects the Sunnah is considered apostate and has exited Islam by consensus, disbelieving in the Quran at the moment they disbelieve in the Sunnah, as there is no distinction between the two; both stem from the same divine source. Scholars have declared the Quranists a disbelieving group, and Shaikh Abdulaziz Ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) issued a detailed fatwa regarding the apostasy of one of the leading Quranists. He also stated, "They are not Quranists but against the Quran, atheists, misguided, indeed disbelievers by the consensus of scholars."

It should be known that the affiliation of the Quranists with the Quran is merely a veil to hide their destructive goals aimed at undermining Islam. True adherence to Islam necessarily involves following the Sunnah. If the Quranists claim to follow the Quran, then the Quran itself is the first to expose their falsehood and misguidance. Numerous verses clarify that Islam cannot be practiced without obeying the Prophet ﷺ and following his Sunnah, as will be discussed, Allah willing.

## Responding to the Quranists' Claim of Sufficing with the Quran over the Sunnah

The claim of sufficing with the Quran over the Sunnah is nothing but an attempt to suffice without Islam entirely, but in an indirect and unclear manner. This is the truth beyond dispute; as there is no Islam without the Sunnah, this is an undeniable axiom that is not open to debate.

As for the Quranists and their ilk, they allege that the Quran is the sole source and unique proof, containing clarification, explanation, and sufficiency for everything, even over the Sunnah! They justify this with Allah's saying: {And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things} *[Al-Nahl: 89]* and similar verses.

**The response to their justification is as follows:**

**Firstly**: The meaning of the verse they cited, and its parallels is beyond the dispute; they are clinging to something not solid. To explain, yes; there's no doubt that the Quran contains clarification and explanation of everything. However, this does not mean sufficiency over the Sunnah; because the entirety of the Sunnah is included within a single verse from it, which is Allah's saying: {What the Messenger gives you, take; and what he forbids you, refrain from} *[Al-Hashr: 7]*.

We have a good narration that clarifies the intended meaning, which is what Al-Bukhari reported (4886) from Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: "May Allah curse the women who tattoo and those who have themselves tattooed, and those who pluck their eyebrows and those who split their teeth for beauty, altering the creation of Allah." When this reached a woman, she came and said: "I have heard that you curse so and so," to which he replied, "Why should I not curse those whom the Messenger of Allah has cursed, while it is in the Book of Allah." She said, "I have read between the covers (of the Quran), and I did not find what you say." He said, "If you have read it, then you have found it. Have you not read: {What the Messenger gives you, take; and what he forbids you, refrain from} *[Al-Hashr: 7]*?" She said, "Yes," He said: "Well, he has forbidden it."

Imam Al-Shafi'i, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "No one encounters a situation in religion without finding the guidance to

the right path in the Book of Allah. If it is said: 'Some rulings are initially established by the Sunnah?' We say: 'That is actually taken from the Book of Allah; because the Book of Allah has obligated us to follow the Messenger and has made it obligatory for us to accept his word'." *[Qawat' al-Adilla 1/29, Al-Iklil fi Istinbat al-Tanzil 12]*.

Thus, following the Sunnah is following the Quran; because the Quran guided to obey the Prophet and adhere to his Sunnah. So, whoever accepts from the Messenger, accepts from Allah.

Therefore, following the Sunnah does not exclude the Quran from being a clarification for everything, because its being a clarification is in terms of it containing some rulings and referring to others in the Sunnah.

**Secondly**: To those who deny the Sunnah, it is said: Is your problem with considering the words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as a basis for judgment; to the extent that if you were to stand before him and heard from him, you would not accept his word? Or do you acknowledge the authority of his sayings and actions but doubt what has been transmitted to you from them?

If the issue is the latter - which is doubting the method of transmission - then this will be our topic in the next chapter, by the will of Allah, and we will discuss it in detail there, by the will of Allah.

In summary: This doubt has no basis; for the transmission of the Prophet's ﷺ sayings has reached the utmost care and precaution, to the extent that you will not be able to prove the authenticity of any statement with more precise criteria than those used to accept the Sunnah, something humanity has not known an equal to.

But if your problem is the former; you do not see in his words any authority, nor do you commit to obeying his commands or

believing his prohibitions; then you have not believed in him as a prophet and messenger, and hence, you have no Islam; because there is no meaning to believing in a messenger while turning away from him and opposing his command, and Allah says: {We did not send any messenger except to be obeyed by Allah's permission} *[Al-Nisa: 64]*, and this is known by innate reason and necessarily from the religion of Islam.

In conclusion: You, who claim to be a Quranist, are between two options: either to adhere to the obedience of the Prophet in detail and entirety, or to renounce the bond of Islam entirely and in detail.

**Thirdly**: It is said to this Quranist: With what evidence did you accept the Quran and consider it a binding proof? If you say: "I believed the Messenger ﷺ in his information that this is the revelation of Allah, so I accepted it on this basis - and certainly, there is no other answer for him but this," then it is said to him: Why then did you not accept his information that his Sunnah is also from the revelation of Allah; for he has said, "Behold, I was given the Scripture and something like it along with it. Behold, I was given the Quran and something like it along with it," and he says that such and such were revealed to him - in several hadiths; so why did you believe him in the first and not believe him in the second?!

**Fourthly**: To someone who claims to be a Muslim adhering only to the Quran, tell me the details of Islamic rulings on: sale, usury, bankruptcy, legal incapacity, reconciliation, assignment of debt, guarantees, partnerships, agency, preemption, loans, and tell me about the details of rulings on leasing, gifts, loans for use, breastfeeding, waiting period, and divorce initiated by the wife! What are the details of these rulings through the Quran?

Moreover, tell me from the Quran about the description of the call to prayer (Adhan) that all Muslims know!

And through the Quran alone: Explain to me the shares of Zakat and the amount to be given to the poor from it!

Do not forget to clarify to me the verses that detail the rulings of Zakat al-Fitr, the times for entering Ihram, the number of circuits in Tawaf and Sa'i, and the stoning of the Jamarat!

Indeed, point out the verses that clarified the five daily prayers that Muslims around the world perform, including their number of units, supplications, and detailed description, along with the rulings on the prostration of forgetfulness and the prayer of the incapacitated!

I will tell you - dear reader - his response: either he stands bewildered not knowing what to say; or perhaps it becomes clear to him that it is impossible to apply true Islam - Islam in its entirety - without the Sunnah, and he returns to the truth, or he becomes pedantic and says: The proof in the rulings of prayer, fasting, and Zakat is actually the practical continuity among Muslims and not the Sunnah! We then say to him: Well; this is one of the fallacies; because continuity must be based on something; so, on what was this continuity you rely on established? To clarify: Let's leave aside the later generations of Muslims, and tell me about the first generation that received these rulings and acted upon them, which is the generation of the Companions, and they were before the continuous transmission as it is clear: on what did they rely in their prayers, their call to prayer, and all their acts of worship? You will not be able to say: They relied on the Quran; because what I mentioned to you does not exist in the Quran, so what remains is that they relied on the Sunnah, and here it is said: Where did the Prophet come up with these rulings? From himself or from a

revelation revealed to him by Allah? If you say from himself, then there is no proof in it, so the continuity you speak of here then has no value because it is built on no foundation, and if you say indeed it is a revelation from Allah; then it has been proven that the Sunnah is a revelation, and if it is a revelation, then adhering to it is obligatory, and this is what is required.

And how excellent is the trace of Imran ibn Husayn, may Allah be pleased with him: They were discussing Hadith when a man said, "Let us leave this and bring us the Book of Allah." Imran said, "You are foolish! Do you find in the Book of Allah the prayer explained? Do you find in the Book of Allah fasting explained? Indeed, this Quran has made that perfect, and the Sunnah explains that." *[Dhamm al-Kalam by Al-Harawi 2/82]*.

## Evidence from the Quran on the Authority of the Sunnah.

It is wise to discuss these matters with the evidence that they claim to believe in and take, even though they are in reality denying it, which are the verses of the Book.

The Quranic verses indicating the authority of the Sunnah are diverse, and I will mention what is feasible from them.

**Firstly**: Every verse that indicates the Prophet's infallibility ﷺ in conveying the message; as His saying: {Nor does he speak from *[his own]* inclination}.

**Secondly**: Every verse that indicates the obligation to take what he ﷺ brought; as His saying: {And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from} *[Al-Najm: 3]*.

**Thirdly**: Every verse that indicates the obligation to obey him ﷺ; as His saying: {And obey Allah and the Messenger that you may obtain mercy} *[Al-Hashr: 7]*.

**Fourthly**: Every verse that indicates the obligation to follow him ﷺ; as His saying: {Say, "If you should love Allah, then follow me, *[so]* Allah will love you"} *[Ali 'Imran: 132]*. And there is no difference in obeying him, following him, and taking what he came with between those who heard from him directly and those to whom his words were reliably conveyed; all are required to obey him ﷺ.

**Fifthly**: Every verse that indicates that he ﷺ is an explainer of what Allah has revealed; as His saying: {And We have sent down to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them} *[Al-Nahl: 44]*. Thus, his speech ﷺ is an explanation of the Quran by the text of the Quran itself, and there is no independence from the explainer for what is explained, and disabling the Sunnah is disabling the application of the Quran.

Therefore, many rulings can only be followed through the Sunnah; starting with the four practical pillars of Islam, these were commanded in a general form in the Quran, with some minor detail, but the clear, detailed aspects were the domain of the Sunnah.

This confirms what I presented earlier that nullifying the Sunnah means nullifying Islam entirely; there is no Islam without Sunnah.

**Sixthly**: Every verse that indicates the obligation to arbitrate him ﷺ in disputes; as His saying: {But no, by your Lord, they will not *[truly]* believe until they make you, *[O Muhammad]*, judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in *[full, willing]* submission} *[Al-Nisa: 65]*.

**Seventhly**: Every verse that indicates the obligation to refer disputes to the Quran and the Sunnah, not to the Quran alone; as His saying: {So if you dispute about something, then refer it to Allah and the Messenger if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best *[way]* and best in result} *[Al-Nisa: 59]*. And referring to him ﷺ after his death is referring to his Sunnah by the consensus of Muslims.

**Eighthly**: Every verse that warns against contradicting him ﷺ; as His saying: {So let those beware who dissent from the Prophet's order, lest fitnah strike them or a painful punishment} *[Al-Nur: 63]*.

**Ninthly**: Every verse that indicates that he ﷺ follows only what is revealed to him; as His saying: {I only follow what is revealed to me} *[Al-Ahqaf: 9]*.

**Tenthly**: Every verse that indicates that Allah reveals the Sunnah just as the Quran is revealed; as His saying: {And Allah has revealed to you the Book and wisdom} *[Al-Nisa: 113]*. And wisdom here is the Sunnah as explained by Islamic scholars.

**Eleventhly**: Every verse that indicates that the Sunnah is a revelation from Allah; as His saying: {Nor does he speak from *[his own]* inclination. It is not but a revelation revealed} *[Al-Najm: 3 - 4]*. And this includes all that he speaks, upon him be prayers and peace, from Quran and Sunnah, and whoever differentiates between them has made a judgment without evidence.

Therefore, you find in the Quran indication to established rulings that were not mentioned in the Quran but were mentioned in the Sunnah; take for example: His saying: {And We did not make the Qibla which you used to face} *[Al-Baqarah: 143]* which is Jerusalem, even though no mention of this was made in the Quran; the evidence for facing towards Jerusalem: the Sunnah, yet Allah said: {And We did not make} *[Al-Isra: 60]*.

Take another example: His saying, {It is made lawful for you during the nights of fasting to go to your wives *[for sexual relations]*} *[Al-Baqarah: 187]*. This abrogated the prohibition, as it was forbidden for Muslims during the nights of Ramadan after sleeping: eating, drinking, and sexual intercourse, where is this in the Quran? It does not exist; its evidence is in the Sunnah, and the Quran acknowledged it.

**Twelfthly**: Every verse that indicates that whoever obeys the Messenger ﷺ has obeyed Allah, as His saying: {He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah; but those who turn away - We have not sent you over them as a guardian} *[Al-Nisa: 80]*.

## Comprehensive Principles on the Authority of the Sunnah

Here are ten comprehensive principles, summarizing this topic:

1. The Sunnah is the counterpart of the Quran; one cannot be independent of the other, and faith in one without the other is insufficient.
2. There is no contradiction between the Sunnah and the Quran; they agree and are harmony, and any claim to the contrary is due to ignorance or ill intent.
3. The Sunnah cannot be disregarded in favor of the Quran alone; the reality of this claim is the disregard for Islam and an attempt to undermine it; as there is no Islam without Sunnah, Islam cannot be understood without Sunnah, and Islam is not accepted without Sunnah.
4. Whoever obeys the Messenger ﷺ has obeyed Allah, and whoever adheres to the Sunnah adheres to the Quran, and turning away from the Sunnah is turning away from the Quran.
5. It is impossible to understand and implement the Quran

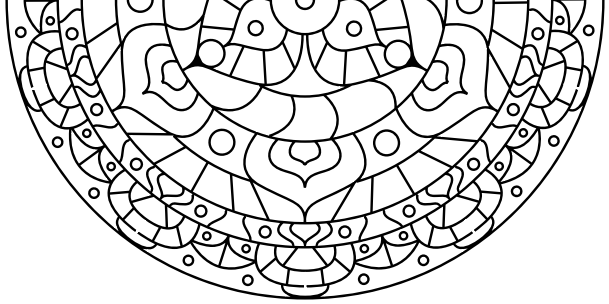
independently of the Sunnah; it is its explanation and interpretation.

6. The Sunnah is an independent authority in legislation; what comes from it in accordance with the Quran is a proof, and what comes from it additionally to the Quran is a proof.
7. The entire Sunnah is authoritative and all of it is revelation; be it in words, deeds, or approvals, with no distinction whether it pertains to acts of worship, transactions, beliefs, or morals.
8. The Sunnah is a perpetual authority, not temporary; it was so, is so, and will remain so.
9. The established authority of the Sunnah and its independence in legislation is a religious necessity, unanimously agreed upon, and only those with no regard for Islam dispute this.
10. The hostility of those who deny the Sunnah is hostility towards Islam itself, and the denial of the Sunnah is but a pretext.

## *For further benefit*

I refer you to three treatises:

1. "Wujub al-Ama bi Sunnat Rasul Allah ﷺ wa Kufr man Ankaraha", by Shaikh Abdul Aziz bin Baz, may Allah have mercy on him.
2. "Manzilat al-Sunnah fi al-Tashri' al-Islami", by Shaikh Muhammad Aman, may Allah have mercy on him.
3. "al-Qur'aniyun wa Shubuhatuhum Hawl al-Sunnah", by Dr. Khadim Hussain, may Allah have mercy on him.



# Chapter Twenty-Three: The Preservation of the Sunnah

The topic of "Preservation of the Sunnah" is no longer a specialized subject discussed only among experts; it has become a general topic of discussion in people's gatherings, engaged in by everyone, including those who are not specialists. The reason is that in recent years, media platforms have been made available to the enemies of the Sunnah, through which they spread their poison, influencing a considerable number.

Therefore, there is an existing problem, which is the efforts made by the enemies of the Sunnah to cast doubt among people about the preservation of their Prophet's Sunnah ﷺ, giving the impression that it, or most of it, has been lost or corrupted, and what is now circulated in books is doubtful!

These detractors are of two types: external enemies like atheists, secularists, orientalists, and the like.

And others among them - individually or within research centers - who wear our clothes and speak our language, but their hearts and minds are captive to their predecessors. It is observed that if you examine their condition, you will find them the furthest from

the Sunnah, with no specialization or care for it, but rather they are intruders, meddling in what they do not excel.

One of their deceits is that they use vague terms so as not to arouse the emotions of Muslims; they say, "We do not criticize the Sunnah but 'the inherited religion' or 'the religion of the dead'!" Their arrows are aimed - by Allah - solely at the prophetic narrations recorded in the books of Sunnah.

The aim of the enemies of Islam is to strive to eliminate it, and there is no faster way to achieve this than by attacking the Sunnah, claiming that the hadiths are forged and nothing of it is authentic with certainty.

Thus, we are facing a fierce war against Islam, and a serious stance and decisive response are necessary. This topic must be addressed.

Every Muslim must be reassured that the Sunnah of his Prophet ﷺ - the beacon of guidance - is preserved by Allah's protection, and he must be confident and certain of this.

And he must be immune, by Allah's success, from the doubts cast by the enemies of the Sunnah.

## Why is their criticism directed at the Sunnah and not the Quran?

These people cannot cast doubt on a single letter of the Quran; because it is preserved in the hearts of Muslims and their scriptures, so touching it is a foolish step that does not benefit; hence, they had no choice but to target the Sunnah; as it does not have this level of preservation and attention from all tiers of Muslims, both their scholars and the general populace.

Knowing that if they topple the Sunnah, they have toppled the Quran! For the Quran - in understanding and action - cannot stand without the establishment of the Sunnah.

However, the Quran has not been spared from their aggression either, but in terms of its meanings, not its transmission.

In summary: The enemies of Islam know that the Sunnah is Islam, so the real Islam in its details is nothing but what the Sunnah, which explains the Quran, contains; hence, casting doubt among Muslims about the attribution of hadiths to the Prophet ﷺ means undermining Islam entirely.

It should be known that casting doubt on the preservation of the Sunnah is a subsequent step to the previous suspicion raised in the last chapter, which is the attack on the authority of the Sunnah itself, and the claim of sufficing with the Quran. They say to those who were not influenced by that: Granted that the Sunnah is authoritative, and indispensable; but where is the Sunnah?! What is recorded in the books of Sunnah is forged and altered, while the true Sunnah has been lost for centuries!

Regardless, the Sunnah - despite the efforts of the haters - is preserved by Allah's protection, and their schemes will only increase it in firmness and spread.

## The Islamic Grounding for the Preservation of the Prophetic Sunnah, and the Evidence for This

This grounding is crucially important because, as previously mentioned, every Muslim must be certain of the preservation of the Sunnah, so that they are not taken lightly by the misguided, nor deceived by those who lead astray.

It is sufficient for the Muslim to know, in general terms, that the Sunnah is a form of revelation, and that the Prophet ﷺ speaks nothing but the truth. Allah the Almighty says about His Prophet ﷺ: {Nor does he speak from *[his own]* inclination. It is not but a revelation revealed} *[Al-Najm: 3 - 4]*, and revelation is preserved by Allah's protection, {Indeed, it is We who sent down the Dhikr (the Quran) and indeed, We will be its guardian} *[Al-Hijr: 9]*. Thus, the Sunnah must indeed be preserved.

The Sunnah is among Allah's proofs against His servants; and Allah's proofs are preserved.

This, on a general level, but in detail, we have several transmitted and rational pieces of evidence, which are addressed to the Muslim. As for others, they should first be addressed by acknowledging the truth of our Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ prophethood, and then by the matter of preserving the Sunnah.

The evidence we are dealing with are numerous, and I will suffice with some of them:

**Firstly**, the preservation of the Sunnah is a necessary consequence of bearing witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, because obeying him is a requirement of this testimony, and it is obvious that his obedience cannot be realized unless his Sunnah is preserved. Meaning, if his Sunnah were lost, its loss would prevent us from obeying him, for how can we obey something unknown! Therefore, Allah will certainly preserve the Sunnah to enable Muslims to fulfill the testimony He commanded.

**Secondly**, the four practical pillars of Islam, and the rest of the religious rulings, cannot be known or practiced without knowledge of the Sunnah; hence its preservation is necessary so that we can understand how to implement them; if lost, the religion would be lost, and our adherence to the religion would become futile or an

unbearable obligation; as there would be no way for us to know it, which is impossible.

**Thirdly**, if the Quran is the preserved book remaining in this nation until Allah inherits the earth and whoever is on it; then the Sunnah must also be preserved, because it cannot be understood without it. Allah Almighty says: {And We have not sent down to you the Book except that you may clarify to them that wherein they differ} *[Al-Nahl: 64]*, and He says: {And We have sent down to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them} *[Al-Nahl: 44]*.

**Fourthly**, Allah Almighty has promised to preserve the reminder He revealed; He says: {Indeed, it is We who sent down the Dhikr (the Quran) and indeed, We will be its guardian} *[Al-Hijr: 9]*. This includes preserving the Quran and the Sunnah as well; because the Sunnah is a revelation from Allah as previously stated; thus, it is part of the reminder, and since the Sunnah clarifies the Quran, preserving the clarified implies preserving the clarifier.

**Fifthly**, Allah Almighty has commanded us, the Muslim community, to follow the Prophet's ﷺ example; He says: {There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern} *[Al-Ahzab: 21]*, and He has commanded us to arbitrate his judgment, saying: {But no, by your Lord, they will not *[truly]* believe until they make you, *[O Muhammad]*, judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves} *[Al-Nisa: 65]*. This is a general ruling for the entire nation, and it cannot take him as an example or arbitrate his judgment unless his Sunnah reaches them. If the Sunnah were lost, this command would become futile or an unbearable obligation; how can we be charged with something we cannot attain! Allah is most merciful and wise to charge us with this.

**Sixthly**, those who doubt the preservation of the Sunnah yet acknowledge the preservation of the Quran are contradictory; since by accepting that the Quran has been preserved through continuous chains of narration to the Prophet ﷺ; they must also accept that the Sunnah is preserved through continuous chains of narration to him ﷺ. The method that delivered the Quran to us is the same method that delivered the Sunnah to us, so what makes us accept the former and not the latter when both are revelations similarly transmitted?!

If it is said: the Quran is Mutawatir (widely transmitted), it is said: there are also Mutawatir hadiths in the Sunnah, and the opponent claims the Sunnah is not preserved in any aspect; thus, their claim is invalidated.

**Seventh and lastly**, to those who doubt the authenticity of the Prophetic hadiths, one may ask: Can any transmitted statement from anyone be proven to you, or do you reject all transmissions? If his answer is the latter, then the discussion with him is severed; for he is beyond the bounds of the reasonable. If his answer is the former, that is, he has no objection to accepting proven transmissions; then we say: What is the method by which transmissions are proven to you? And I challenge him to produce any method he accepts, but to prove to him that the Sunnah is transmitted in a more reliable and certain manner.

Therefore, he is faced with two options: either accept the authentic hadiths or reject all transmitted statements; thereby becoming a mockery to the reasonable.

## How was the Sunnah Preserved During the Time of the Prophet ﷺ and His Companions?

Answer: By the grace of Allah, the Sunnah during the prophetic era and the era of the companions was indeed preserved without doubt. The reasons for this preservation are attributed to many factors, from which I will present a few examples:

**Firstly**, the Prophet ﷺ encouraged the preservation and transmission of the Sunnah. He said, "May Allah brighten the face of someone who hears a hadith from us, memorizes it, and then conveys it to others. Sometimes the bearer of knowledge conveys it to someone more understanding than himself, and sometimes the bearer of knowledge is not himself a scholar." This hadith was reported by Abu Dawud (3660) and Tirmidhi (2656).

He ﷺ also informed that the transmission of hadiths through chains of narration is something that will remain in the ummah; the Prophet ﷺ said, "You will listen (to my hadith), and it will be heard from you, and it will be heard from those who heard from you." This was reported by Ahmad (2945) and Abu Dawood (3659).

He also prayed for some of his companions for their memorization, including a prayer for Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him.

**Secondly**, the Prophet ﷺ would repeat his words three times so they could be memorized and understood. He might also review the memorized parts with some of his companions.

**Thirdly**, he ﷺ sternly warned the ummah against lying about him; he said, "Whoever lies about me intentionally, let him take his place in the Fire." This was reported by Bukhari (110) and Muslim (3).

**Fourthly**, he allowed his companions to write down his hadiths. This includes his statement to Abdullah bin Amr, may Allah be pleased with them, "Write, for by the One in whose Hand my soul is, nothing comes out from it (his mouth) except the truth." He indicated his own mouth. This was reported by Abu Dawud (3647), and in Bukhari and Muslim that a man during the year of the conquest asked to write down what he heard from the Prophet ﷺ, and he commanded the companions to write for him.

**Fifthly**, the companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were extremely eager to hear his ﷺ hadith and to memorize it. Hearing even a single hadith from him was considered unbelievably valuable, to the extent that they would travel long distances to hear just one hadith. For instance, Jabir bin Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with him, traveled from Medina to Syria - a journey of a month - not for trade or leisure, but to hear a single hadith from Abdullah bin Anis, may Allah be pleased with him. Upon reaching him and embracing him, he said: "I heard a hadith was transmitted from you that you heard from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and I feared that one of us might die before I could hear it," and then he narrated the hadith to him (Musnad Ahmad 16042). Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, may Allah be pleased with him, traveled from Medina to Egypt to hear a single hadith from Uqba bin Amir, may Allah be pleased with him (Musnad al-Humaidi 388).

**Sixthly**, the companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were people of piety, precaution, and precision in narrating from the Prophet ﷺ, and were very keen to convey exactly as they heard. Al-A'mash, one of the successors of the companions, said: "This knowledge used to be with people who would have preferred to fall from the sky than to add an 'and' or an 'or' or a 'but' to it" (Al-Kifayah by Al-Khatib Al-Baghdadi 177). They were meticulous in their narration and would sometimes hear a hadith being narrated

by someone and would ask for a witness to testify with him that he heard it from the Prophet ﷺ. This is a brief overview of the factors contributing to the preservation of the Sunnah during that era, and indeed, there is much more to it.

## Preservation of the Sunnah in the Ummah After the First Era

Dear reader, I believe you would agree that when someone comes to a grand project—be it scientific or practical—that has involved strenuous efforts and passed through stages of collaborative work, effort, time, labor, study, examination, analysis, and many other aspects, and then someone lightly dismisses all that has been done with a flick of their fingers, or stabs at its side saying, "This is nothing, this has no value!" while they are not specialized in the field they denounce and have no comprehensive knowledge about the matter they speak of - such a person only succeeds in making the reasonable laugh at their reasoning!

I will say it again: Dismissing grand human endeavors—whether scientific or practical—that have involved significant efforts, with a stroke of the pen, as they say, is foolishness, ignorance, and a flaw in thinking.

And truly said was:

*To us it's told, in ignorance Sahl scorns.*

*Sciences unknown to him, his folly adorns.*

*Had he grasped their depths, he'd never belittle,*

*but in the comfort of ignorance, Sahl finds solace, so brittle!*

And it is not hidden that today, some people have lent their ears to the enemies of the Sunnah and have been influenced by their doubts. They sit back on their couches and say: "What guarantees

me that al-Bukhari or al-Tirmidhi did not lie and write things from themselves, then attribute them to the Prophet ﷺ!" Or they say about the Prophetic hadiths: "These are just storytellers' tales" - as I read from one of them on social media!

O you, thousands of hadiths have been narrated by thousands of trustworthy narrators, sieved by hundreds of formidable hadith scholars, and documented by hundreds of proven scholars in hundreds of compendiums; this is indeed something magnificent. So, who are you, and what is the extent of your knowledge to dismiss these efforts?

Wouldn't it have been more appropriate for you to understand the reality before judging it; for judgment on a matter is a branch of its conception.

Do you think it is easy for someone to lie about the Prophet ﷺ, for such a lie to spread and go unnoticed by everyone except you!

Do you think the Sunnah is so insignificant to Muslims, their scholars, and their hadith scholars?

If this is your belief, then you have made a grave mistake!

Let me clarify for you some of these efforts in a few lines and by simplifying the information - despite the difficulty of this summary. Be assured that if you understood what enormous efforts have been made in the process of transmitting hadiths in this nation, generation after generation, until they reached us.

If you understood even a part of these efforts and were fair, then by Allah's grace, the effects of this unfair criticism would vanish from you.

The preservation, compilation, transmission, and documentation of the Sunnah: a tremendous, painstaking process, as mentioned earlier, led by three categories of scholars:

**Firstly**, narrators and memorizers who exerted effort in tracking down narrations and hearing from scholars; they memorized and documented.

**Secondly**, scholars of criticism and accreditation who sifted through these narrations and examined the conditions of their narrators.

**Thirdly**, formidable hadith scholars who documented these hadiths in compilations, scrutinized, organized, and categorized them.

The first stage: Allah Almighty chose for the preservation of His Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ Sunnah, trustworthy Imams from the people of religion, memorization, and integrity, who reached such levels of devotion and piety that they would refuse to lie about the Prophet ﷺ even if they were to be tortured.

These trustworthy narrators dedicated their lives to tracking, memorizing, and documenting the hadith; they traveled, left their homelands, spent their nights awake, and their days in exhaustion as they moved from one person to another who had something from the Prophetic hadith to hear from him; Abu Hatim al-Razi, one of the hadith Imams, walked about six thousand kilometers in his journey - in which he moved between more than twenty cities to hear hadith. Ibn Mandah: his journey took forty-five years away from his family, roaming countries in search of hadith, and there are many examples of this.

Hearing the hadith was not something random, but rather precise. They generally would not narrate from just anyone; but from those who were sharp, memorizers, and devout. A narrator

would memorize what he heard from his teacher and then write it down or write it down and then memorize it. He would compare what he wrote with his teacher's book to ensure he did not make a mistake in what he wrote, paying attention to accuracy and the form of what they wrote. A student might ask his teacher to repeat the hadith until he memorized it. If he doubted a hadith among a group of hadiths written on his scroll and could not distinguish it among them, he would abandon the scroll and not narrate from it as a precaution!

The significant outcome of these tremendous efforts was the existence of the chains of narrators (Isnads) for the hadiths, which are a matter of pride for this nation and have been acknowledged and envied by the enemies of Islam.

The Isnads are a chain of narrators that leads to the words of the Prophet ﷺ, meaning the transmission from one narrator to another until it reaches the Prophet ﷺ. This characteristic is unique to the Muslim nation and distinguishes it from others; no other nation, ancient or modern, has shown such care for isnads. Instead, their scriptures are mixed with what came from the prophets and others; hence, their books were subjected to alteration, and their religion was infiltrated by what does not belong to it.

Consider the People of the Book, the Jews and Christians: they do not have a continuous chain of narration for either the Old Testament or the New Testament, which together form what they call the Bible.

The point is, the Isnads of the hadiths are the guarantee and the seal on them, ensuring they cannot be confused with anything else. They are well-known and preserved among scholars; no one can introduce into them what does not belong to them. And how beautifully Imam Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, may Allah have mercy

on him, said: "The Isnad is part of the religion, and were it not for the isnad, whoever wished could say whatever they wished" *[Introduction to Sahih Muslim 1/15]*.

**The second stage**: The critique of the hadith narrators to judge the hadiths based on their acceptance or rejection.

This stage involved precise criticism, thorough examination, and deep scrutiny, allowing only the established facts to pass through.

This task was undertaken by hadith scholars and critical evaluators who devoted their lives to tracking the conditions of the narrators and judging them, resulting in two unparalleled sciences among non-Muslims: the science of narrators (Ilm al-Rijal) and the science of criticism and accreditation (Ilm al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil).

In summary, these Imams endeavored to investigate the conditions of the hadith narrators, asking scholars about them, and traveling to countries to meet them face-to-face, thus becoming familiar with every narrator's condition: his name, lineage, birthdate, location, his religion, trustworthiness, and memory. They might even test him to see if there were any critical remarks that would lead to the rejection of his narrations. They knew when he began hearing hadith, how he heard it, and from whom he heard. Then they knew the conditions of his teachers, their homelands, their deaths, their narrating times, and their habits in narrating. They also knew the narrations of other narrators from these teachers and compared his narrations with theirs to see if he was accurate or not. They even examined his written scrolls if he had any, and whether they were precise and accurate, scrutinizing the wording of his narration; whether he said, "So-and-so told us" or "So-and-so informed us," or "I heard so-and-so," or merely said, "So-and-so said." They set strict conditions for narrating from books, how to copy them, and how to read them to their authors.

They had great insight into the narrators, knowing them better than they knew their own relatives, to the extent that you find in the books of criticism and accreditation statements like: "So-and-so, who narrated thousands of hadiths, made mistakes in only eighteen hadiths, which are such and such!"

Then, these Imams documented the conditions of the narrators in classified books, some of which listed weak narrators, others dedicated to trustworthy ones, some general, and others specific to narrators from certain regions. They even specialized further, with books dedicated to the narrators' nicknames, their lineages, their categories, and books for correcting their names or explaining those that are similar, among others.

The purpose is that Allah Almighty has raised distinguished and excellent individuals for the Sunnah of His Prophet ﷺ, who distinguished the trustworthy narrators from the weak ones, and the authentic hadith from the weak, all to safeguard the noble Prophetic status from being attributed with falsehood or narrated with what is not from his sayings.

Among the delightful things mentioned is the statement of the hadith scholar Imam al-Daraqutni, may Allah have mercy on him: "O people of Baghdad, do not think that anyone can lie about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while I am alive!" *[Fath al-Mughith by Al-Sakhawi 1/320]*.

This critical approach adopted by these evaluating Imams was objective and impartial, with no favoritism or injustice to either kin or stranger; they criticized those among the narrators who deserved criticism, even if it was their closest relative. Imam Abu Dawud al-Sijistani ruled his own son to be untruthful, Zaid bin Abi Unaisah said: "Do not take from my brother," Imam Ali bin

Al-Madini said: "My father is weak in hadith," and Jarir bin Abdul Hamid deemed his brother as weak.

This impartiality, fairness, precision, and scrutiny meant that every narrator who wanted to narrate a hadith about the Prophet ﷺ was extremely cautious because he knew that the eyes and ears of the critics were open! They scrutinized every word he said.

All this is but a brief glimpse into the science of men (Ilm al-Rijal) and criticism and accreditation (Ilm al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil); the space here does not allow for discussing the many other sciences of hadith, which exceed sixty disciplines, all aimed at serving, preserving, and protecting the noble Hadith. This includes the science of hadith terminology, anomalies in hadith, difficult hadiths, rare hadiths, hadith derivation, and so on.

**The third stage**: The stage of documenting the hadiths with their isnads back to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. This began clearly in the middle of the second Hijri century and thereafter, at the hands of great hadith scholars who showed the utmost care for hadith and its narrators. They collected the hadiths they heard from their teachers during their travels and compiled them into hadith encyclopedias, organizing them creatively: sometimes according to jurisprudential chapters, sometimes by the names of the teachers, and sometimes according to the Musnads of the companions, among others. These hadith compilations, by Allah's grace and generosity, have preserved the Prophetic hadiths from being lost or obliterated, like Muwatta Malik, Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, and hundreds of other books. These books are narrated by scholars in every era through hearing and ijaza, up to our time, where a student narrates the book from his teacher, and his teacher from his teacher, and so on, back to the author of the book. Those unaware of this should refer to the well-known books of authentication, which are numerous and famous.

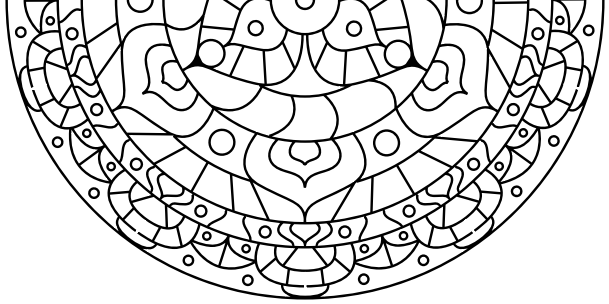
By Allah's grace, these books have also reached us as manuscripts, preserved from alteration and tampering. Scholars have made significant efforts in printing them after collecting their copies from around the world, selecting the best among them, and comparing them to verify the accuracy of the texts.

The manuscripts of hadith books are very numerous and spread across libraries worldwide, and you should know that Sahih al-Bukhari, for example, has more than two thousand and three hundred manuscript copies!

In conclusion: Before anyone speaks in a way that affects the dignity of the Prophetic hadiths, they should first understand how these hadiths have reached us fresh and unaltered, and what difficulties and efforts were made. Then, let them know that it is impossible for anyone to lie about the Prophet ﷺ and for their lie to simply pass unnoticed! I repeat: This is impossible, and exposing such falsehood is among the easiest and simplest tasks for hadith scholars, all thanks to Allah.

*For further benefit*

I recommend reading "Al-Rihla fi Talab al-Hadith" by Al-Khatib Al-Baghdadi, may Allah have mercy on him.



# Chapter Twenty-Four: Doubts Spread by the Enemies of the Sunnah

We have already discussed the rights of the Sunnah, its authority, and its preservation. This chapter deals with the doubts cast by the enemies of the Sunnah.

There are two main doubts:

**The first doubt**: The existence of problems in the hadiths. They say: Some hadiths contradict reason, which undermines their authority or weakens confidence in them! This doubt is probably the most frequently raised by the enemies of the Sunnah.

We have previously clarified the relationship between transmission (Naql) and reason (ʻAql) in the third chapter; the esteemed reader is referred to it for more detail.

Here, it is necessary to lay down some introductory points detailed in that chapter, summarized here with some additions:

**Firstly**: It is impossible for a verse or a sound hadith to contradict obvious reason. There is no antagonism between the transmitted

Sharia and rational truth; this is a fundamental principle for us Muslims. The fabricated contention between the Sunnah and reason has no basis in reality.

**Secondly**: The notion of the centrality and precedence of reason over transmission (the evidence of revelation, namely the Quran and Sunnah) is certainly erroneous, and the opposite is true.

**Thirdly**: Allah Almighty made reason a tool for understanding transmission, not a judge over it. He created it to connect us to Him, not to sever us from Him. He gave it to us to grasp what is near, not what is far.

**Fourthly**: The most complete in reason—namely the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them—never found any contradiction between a transmitted proof and a rational determination whatsoever.

**Fifthly**: Every claimed contradiction between hadith and reason falls into one of three categories:

1. The hadith is not authentically attributed to the Prophet ﷺ.
2. The claimed rational proof is not valid, meaning what is claimed to contradict the hadith is in reality a theoretical mistake termed by its proponent as rational, but the reasoning was incorrect, either in conception or belief.
3. The hadith is not understood correctly.

**Sixthly:** It is necessary to distinguish between what is rationally impossible and what is merely unlikely to occur; understanding this point clears up many complications.

To explain: They say: This is rationally impossible. We respond: What is rationally impossible is what reason deems cannot exist; like something being existent and non-existent at the same time,

or a part being larger than the whole, or a child being older than his parent. We challenge them to bring even one example from the Sunnah that fits this description. However, many of their problems pertain to things not commonly occurring, such as the prophetic miracles—for example, water springing from between his ﷺ fingers—which is not impossible rationally but is unusual—we are not accustomed to it. Yet, it is rationally possible—even if beyond the capacity of humans and jinn—and He who enacted these miracles is capable of everything, exalted is He. If He, in His majesty, can bring forth blood from fingers, then bringing forth water is not beyond Him!

**Seventhly:** The essence of Islam is submission to Allah Almighty and His revelation. This includes the belief in the supremacy of the Quran and the Sunnah over everything else. Revelation is paramount, and everything else is secondary.

Islam's foundation is only established on submission and surrender, {And our command is but to submit to the Lord of the Worlds} *[Al-An'am: 71]*.

**Eighthly**: Turning away from revelation and prioritizing others over it is a manifestation of deep-seated hypocrisy in the heart; let the wise be wary. Allah Almighty says: {And when it is said to them, "Come to what Allah has revealed and to the Messenger," you see the hypocrites turning away from you in aversion} *[Al-Nisa: 61]*.

**Ninthly**: The scope of reason is limited, and its fields are finite. Honoring it involves applying it within its domain, not burdening it beyond its capacity.

**Tenthly**: Excess in rationalism is the basis of misguidance.

After these introductions, it can be said regarding what the enemies of the Sunnah claim: These people must understand that

for us Muslims, the issue is a matter of faith more than anything else, which they overlook. Therefore, no matter how much they attack the Sunnah, our trust in it or our reverence for it will not be shaken.

What does it mean that the issue is a matter of faith? Answer: When a Muslim adheres to a verse, they believe they are submitting to Allah and His decree. And if they adhere to a hadith, they believe they are complying with the decree of a Prophet ﷺ who receives revelation; thus, they are also submitting to Allah.

And what does it mean to be submissive to Allah? It means everything!

Do you know who Allah is? He is the Lord of the Worlds, the King of kings, the Most Knowledgeable of all, the Wisest of judges, and the Most Merciful of all who show mercy.

He is the Magnificent, and His wisdom within our hearts is truly profound. Yet, after all this, you dare say to me, "This notion defies reason!" I tell you, impossible! For this wisdom emanates from the One who created reason itself. The source is singular, and therefore, contradiction between them is inconceivable. Allah's knowledge surpasses your intellect, and His wisdom is far grander. So, find peace, and let others find peace as well.

Allah creates the intellect, and it is impossible for a creation to correct its Creator. It is impossible to prioritize the rational over the decree of its Lord, which is contrary to reason.

Then, we Muslims have not adopted this belief out of ignorance, but rather from knowledge and reason; thus, all the ramblings that you call rationalities are, to us, definitively dismissed by reason.

I will illustrate this with two examples:

**The first example:** In the authentic hadith, it is said that the sun prostrates to Allah beneath the Throne *[Sahih al-Bukhari 3199, and Sahih Muslim 159]*, and the misguided say this is something that reason cannot accept!

To them, we say: Do you believe that Allah created the sun or not? If you say yes, then what is the problem with a creation prostrating to its Creator! And what is the problem with the All-Powerful Creator assigning a specific place for a creation to prostrate in, and hiding the manner of this from another creation?

Then, have you comprehensively understood all aspects of the sun so accurately that it seems to you like a ball in a dish, with every detail within your grasp? The answer is, of course, no! The sun is a vast creation, capable of fitting more than a million Earths our size within it; and many truths related to it remain unknown to all people; let its prostration be among them!

Then, is your rejection of the sun's prostration based on the assumption that it prostrates in the same manner as our prostration, hence you deemed it impossible?! Do you think that when we say, "The sun prostrates," it does so on seven limbs like us? It prostrates in a manner befitting its creation, and you see that if a person is healthy, his prostration has one form, and if he is ill—praying on a chair or lying down—his prostration has another form, yet it is the same human! How then for a creation that is entirely different from him!

**The second example:** Those who oppose the Sunnah say: The hadith states that the devil urinates in the ear of the person who sleeps until morning without praying *[Sahih al-Bukhari 1144, and Sahih Muslim 774]*; and this contradicts reason and sensation; for we see no trace of urine on the sleeper!

This objection is weak; because the urine of the devil is not of the same kind as ours, just as his creation is not of the same kind as ours. And those who believe in the existence of the devil, though they do not see him, should also believe in the existence of his urine, though they do not see it! For the One who informed us of the existence of the devil is the One who informed us that he urinates in the ear of the person who sleeps without praying!

## What Should One Do if They Find Themselves Troubled by a Perceived Contradiction Between Hadith and Reason?

**They should do four things:**

- **Firstly**: Condition themselves to prioritize revelation over everything else.
- **Secondly**: Be certain that there can be no contradiction between transmission and reason and feel reassured.
- **Thirdly**: Aim to reach the truth.
- **Fourthly**: Without delay, consult one of the scholars whom they believe to have a satisfying answer to their problem, for the cure for ignorance is to ask.

**The second doubt:** Among the confusions spread by the enemies of the Sunnah is their claim that the hadiths available to people today cannot be trusted because most of them are solitary reports (Ahad), and solitary reports cannot be trusted due to the possibility of the narrator's error, forgetfulness, or dishonesty; as they are not infallible.

If the hadiths are subject to doubt and suspicion, it's no surprise that they are disregarded, or at least, only those supported by the Quran are accepted.

This argument is one of their many fallacies; the previous chapter touched on the preservation of the Prophetic Sunnah and how the Prophetic hadiths underwent stages of study, examination, and rigorous verification to distinguish the authentic from the inauthentic. Those interested should refer to that chapter.

In essence, the people's doubt is based on a flawed analogy; they assumed that a sound hadith, which has not reached the level of being widely transmitted (Mutawatir), is like any news you hear from a man passing in the street whom you do not know! So, you do not trust him.

Thus, according to these people, this is the value they ascribe to the Prophet's ﷺ hadith!

This analogy they've drawn is flawed; the truth is that if a report is authentically attributed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, it is a definitive proof and must be accepted in all aspects of the religion.

I'm not here to argue this point, as it requires lengthy discussion; however, I want to highlight that their claim is invalid; we're not talking about any solitary reports; we're discussing the hadiths of the Prophet ﷺ, and there's a vast difference between the two.

We are talking about solitary reports attributed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, which scholars of hadith have deemed acceptable and established. These reports have gained their certitude and authenticity from four sources: the reporter, the one reported about, the one reporting, and the subject reported.

These four sources have lent certainty to the solitary reports attributed to the Prophet -ﷺ- and established their authenticity:

**From the perspective of the reporter:** Who reported it? They are the Companions of the Messenger -ﷺ-, the best of creation after the prophets in religion and knowledge, followed

by the Successors, their Followers, and so on. These are the best generations, people of piety, wariness, and precision. How can they be compared to the common people?

**From the perspective of the one reported about:** The solitary reports attributed to the Messenger of Allah -ﷺ- convey information about Allah and His religion. They are among His proofs against His creation, so Allah ﷻ will certainly preserve His proofs and His religion. He says, {Indeed, it is We who sent down the Dhikr (the reminder) and indeed, We will be its guardian} *[Al-Hijr: 9]*.

**From the perspective of the content:** These reports convey the words of the Messenger of Allah -ﷺ-, whose words, due to their majesty and the light of prophethood, are unmistakably distinct from the words and narratives of people for those experienced with it.

**From the perspective of the subject:** Those who received, judged, and accepted these reports are the great hadith scholars who showed great care for the hadith of the Messenger of Allah -ﷺ-, purifying his authentic words from others. Therefore, the analogy here is flawed due to the significant differences between the two cases.

It's surprising that when you examine these people's affairs, you find them certain about many statements, quotations, and poems without raising the issues they do with hadiths, claiming they are solitary reports. You also find them in their transactions and writings on social media and elsewhere, accepting many news items related to people's conditions and society, whether joys, sorrows, political issues, etc.; even though what they assert as established has not been examined and verified as the authentic hadiths have, and there's no comparison at all, showcasing a flawed contradiction!

## General Advice on Dealing with Doubts Related to the Sunnah for Those Who Are Troubled by Encountering Any of Them

Here are general responses to every doubt raised by the enemies of the Sunnah:

**Firstly**: If the one raising a doubt about the Sunnah is among the Quranists; then we say to them: Similar doubts or ones close to them have been raised by the enemies of Allah regarding the Quran itself! Whatever answer you give to them is our answer to your doubt!

**Secondly**: Every doubt raised about the Sunnah, by Allah's grace, has been answered, not from just one angle but from many. The Muslims challenge anyone to prove a single flaw in a sound hadith. Great works have been authored on this subject, so those who seek the truth should look into them and find the cure for their ailment.

**Thirdly**: The essence of all claims made against the Sunnah boils down to ignorance of the Sunnah, its meanings, what is established from it and what is not, often accompanied by malicious intent and desires.

**Fourthly**: To those who criticize the Sunnah, we ask: What proportion of the hadiths do you find objectionable out of the thousands that make up the Sunnah? How many do you claim to object to: one hadith, two, ten, twenty? What percentage do these represent out of the thousands of hadiths that are clear and unproblematic? This shows that the enemies of the Sunnah have fallen into the logical fallacy of "hasty generalization"; due to their limited perspective, ignorance, and desires, they find a few hadiths

problematic in their opinion, and then generalize their judgment to reject the entire Sunnah! How is this fair?

**Fifthly**: Be aware of the contradictions and fallacies committed by those who attack the Sunnah.

Take, for example, one of the biggest doubts raised by the enemies of the Sunnah who question its authority: They say that the Prophet ﷺ forbade the writing of his hadiths, where he stated, "Do not write from me, and whoever has written anything from me other than the Quran should erase it" *[Sahih Muslim 3004]*. Based on this, they argue that these hadiths are entirely unacceptable.

The response: Just as the prohibition against writing has been reported from the Prophet ﷺ, so has permission, even encouragement, in other hadiths, something they overlook because it contradicts their desires. They mentioned the hadith of prohibition but ignored the many hadiths granting permission.

Among them: The Prophet ﷺ commanded that his words be written down for one of the Companions on the day of the Conquest, saying, "Write for Abu Shah" *[Bukhari (2434), and Muslim (1355)]*.

And: He said to Abdullah bin Amro, may Allah be pleased with them, "Write, for by the One in whose hand is my soul, nothing comes from it (his mouth) but the truth," pointing to his mouth *[Abu Dawud (3647)]*. The hadiths permitting writing are more numerous and authentic, so why don't they rely on them? Is this not a sign that they are following their desires?

In any case, reconciling the prohibition against writing hadith and the permission to do so, it is said: The prohibition came first, then it was abrogated by the permission to write.

The initial prohibition was due to the fear of confusing the Quran with the Sunnah. Once there was no longer concern for confusion, permission was granted. This is the view of the majority of scholars, while some scholars said: The prohibition was not absolute, but rather it was about writing hadith and the Quran on the same sheet. If they were on separate sheets, it was permitted.

Regardless of all the above, I want to draw attention to the contradiction and fallacy in their argument; they have used the hadith itself to deny the hadith! Meaning, they reject the hadiths; so how can they use a hadith to support their rejection? They face a dilemma: either they believe in this hadith, which nullifies their rejection, or they do not believe in it, which invalidates their argument!

Take another example: Among the doubts they raise against the Sunnah is: They say that the Prophetic hadiths contain weak elements, so confidence in them is weak! This is a flimsy argument and a blatant fallacy; you say there are weak hadiths; how did you know they were weak? You only knew this through the hadith scholars who judged them as weak; so why accept their judgment on the weakness of some hadiths and not their judgment on the authenticity of others?! Is this not proof of contradiction and of desires controlling you!

**Sixthly**: Emphasize that when they raise their doubts, they might be discussing things they don't understand; be aware of this.

An example of this: One of the most famous doubts raised by these people, mentioned by some Orientalists, is that the number of hadiths is exceptionally large, which they claim casts doubt on their authenticity. Even al-Bukhari mentions that he selected his Sahih from six hundred thousand hadiths; they say: It is

impossible for such a number of hadiths to have been transmitted by a single person!

The truth is that their statement reveals their ignorance, and their misunderstanding of what hadiths are and the reality of narrations. This is clear from three angles:

1. Hadiths are not only verbal statements but also include the actions ﷺ and approvals of the Prophet ﷺ. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, observed his ﷺ state in every minor and major aspect. If we were to record every movement, stillness, and whisper of one of these deniers over just one year, we would end up with thousands of narrations!

2. In the terminology of the early generations and hadith scholars, a hadith is counted by its narrator, not by its wording. If a number of Companions narrated a word from the Prophet ﷺ, the narration of each Companion is considered a separate hadith. For example, the hadith: "May Allah brighten the face of someone who hears my words, understands them, and conveys them" was narrated by twenty-four Companions; so, to them, it is twenty-four hadiths, not just one!

3. Many hadith scholars include in their collections not only the Prophet's hadiths but also the actions and sayings of the Companions and Successors; therefore, the considerable number of hadiths should not be surprising.

**Seventhly**: Pay attention to the belief system of those who raise doubts about the Sunnah; it might be more beneficial not to engage in their specific doubt but to discuss their fundamental beliefs first.

For example, if an atheist criticizes the hadiths that affirm prophetic miracles, it might be wiser to first discuss the proof of the Creator's existence with them; because if the existence of the Almighty Lord is established, their doubt disappears; as a miracle

that defies normalcy is performed by Him who is capable of everything and does as He wills, exalted be He.

**Eighthly**: To dispel doubts, it's important to collect evidence and narrations related to the raised issue; then, to look into ways to reconcile them or to prioritize based on scientific principles.

How often do the enemies of the Sunnah claim a problem with a hadith, while in another narration of it lies the clarification of the correct understanding and the removal of the doubt entirely.

**Ninthly**: Be aware that many of the doubts they present have no evidence backing them at all, not even a semblance of evidence, but are merely baseless claims or denials. For example, one of them might say: "This hadith contradicts reason"; but when asked why it contradicts reason, you find they have nothing to offer!

**Tenthly**: Verifying the authenticity of the hadith is a fundamental step before researching the doubt raised against it, and how many hadiths they criticize and use to disrupt the entire Sunnah, in reality, turn out to be weak or fabricated!

## Why Have the Doubts Raised by the Enemies of the Sunnah Increased These Days?

Because, unfortunately, media platforms promoting the falsehoods of the enemies of the Sunnah exist and have opened their doors to all those who criticize it, regardless of their backgrounds. There are many television channels that host enemies of the Sunnah, and social media is also overflowing with them; Quranists write and speak, as do rationalists, secularists, atheists, Christians, and others.

Then, there are Muslims who listen to them and even promote their words, albeit unintentionally! You might find someone

posting in WhatsApp groups or on their social media account: "Look what so-and-so is saying!" Even if this is done with the intention of denouncing it, it inadvertently spreads the doubt, which might have otherwise remained obscure!

Therefore, it is crucial that we advise each other to let falsehood die and to minimize mentioning its proponents as much as possible.

If you hear a doubt concerning the Quran, the Sunnah, or Islamic rulings: why do people need to spread it among themselves? Are you aware that you could be causing harm to some of the ignorant with it? It would be more appropriate for you to ignore it, turn the page on mentioning it, and advise those who spread it among people, whether they are denouncers or skeptics.

## Final Recommendations

**The First Recommendation:** It has been mentioned before that the obligatory response to the doubts raised by the enemies of Islam in general is to abandon them and to completely turn away from them. This is a religious obligation. Allah says, {And shun the abomination} *[Al-Mudathir: 5]*. The Prophet ﷺ says in Sahih Bukhari (10), "The emigrant is the one who forsakes what Allah has prohibited," and Allah says, {And when you see those who engage in *[offensive]* discourse concerning Our verses, then turn away from them} *[Al-An'am: 68]*. "Turn away" is an imperative verb, and the imperative indicates obligation. Thus, it is obligatory for a Muslim to turn away from doubts, not to lend them an ear, and to seek safety; for nothing equals it.

Our Prophet ﷺ says in hadith reported in Bukhari and Muslim: "When you see those who follow that which is not entirely clear therein *[from the Quran]*, then they are the ones whom Allah has

named *[as the losers]*, so beware of them." "So, beware of them" is an imperative form that implies obligation.

Exposing oneself to doubts is a disease that weakens the heart's strength and diminishes faith; so, beware.

**The Second Recommendation:** Hold onto the general answer to every doubt, which is: Your knowledge of the truth is sufficient to recognize the falsehood of anything that opposes it, {So what is there after the truth except misguidance?} *[Yunus: 32]*. It is not necessary to know the details of refuting a doubt; doubts will never end. It suffices to know that it opposes the truth, and thus it should be avoided.

Meaning: Falsehood is recognized by two methods: knowing the negating contradiction that invalidates the falsehood, and another way: knowing the truth; hence, anything that contradicts the truth is false. So, if someone comes to me with a doubt related to the divinity, prophethood, the Quran, the Sunnah, or the rulings and I do not know its detailed answer, I will say to him confidently: You have brought me something I do not know in detail, it is unclear to me and there's no problem if it remains unclear, but I am certain that it is false, and the proof of this: it opposes the truth, and it is impossible for anything that opposes the truth to be anything but false.

**The Third Recommendation:** Always keep in mind two statements from the Book of Allah; contemplate them carefully, not hastily:

**The first:** Allah's saying, {And you did not expect that the Book would be conveyed to you except as a mercy from your Lord. So do not be an ally to the disbelievers. And never let them avert you from the signs of Allah after they have been revealed to you} *[Al-Qassas: 86 - 87]*.

If you knew that the Quran - and the Sunnah is its sibling - was revealed as a mercy from Him, exalted be He, you would know that everything He has commanded and forbidden is a mercy and a grace from Allah. Do not harbor any discomfort in your heart from anything in it, thinking that opposing it would be better and more beneficial. Therefore, do not care about the deception of the enemies of revelation and do not be fooled by it, and do not follow their desires.

**The second:** Allah's saying, {And We have certainly presented for the people in this Quran from every *[kind of]* example. But if you bring them a sign, those who disbelieve will surely say, "You *[believers]* are but falsifiers." Thus does Allah seal the hearts of those who do not know. So be patient. Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth. And let not those who are uncertain in faith discourage you} *[Al-Rum: 58 - 59]*.

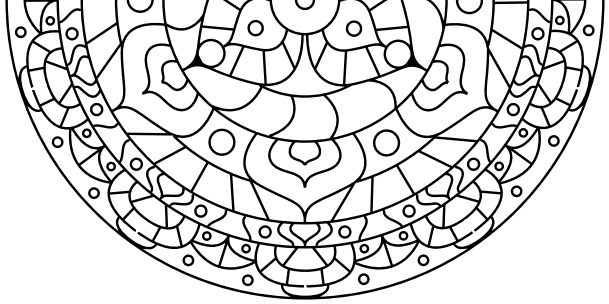
Allah, the Exalted, has revealed in this Quran truths that make matters known and cut off the argument, but the wrongdoers refused to accept the clear truth; no matter what sign you bring them to prove the truth of what you have brought, they will say to the truth: It is falsehood. So be patient in your adherence to revelation and its veneration. Allah's promise is coming without a doubt, and you will receive the reward for your patience and steadfastness from your Lord. Beware of being discouraged by those whose faith is uncertain; if you do not take them into consideration and beware of their deceit, they will take you lightly and lead you to instability in your position.

These verses were not revealed in vain; we must reflect on them deeply, especially in this era. Allah is the one whose help is sought.

*For further benefit*

I recommend reading:

1. "Shubuhat Hawla al-Sunnah" by Shaikh Abdul Razzaq Afifi, may Allah have mercy on him.
2. "Al-Anwar al-Kashifah" by Shaikh Abdul Rahman Al-Mu'allimi, may Allah have mercy on him.



# Chapter Twenty-Five: The Limits of Natural (Empirical) Science

Natural science, in short, is the study of nature and natural phenomena. It represents a specific type of human knowledge, aiming to explore nature in all its phenomena, properties, and governing laws. Therefore, it is limited to the material realm perceivable by the senses and relies on the empirical method based on sensory experience. Understanding this issue is crucial.

Undoubtedly, it is beneficial in its domain, has greatly benefited humanity, and contributed to its welfare. However, the problem arises when a science oversteps its boundaries, venturing into the domains of other sciences, judging them either negatively or affirmatively while lacking the competence for this!

Empirical science has its limits that it cannot exceed, nor can it judge matters outside its scope of reasoning, which is the material realm perceived by the senses.

Let me clarify what I mean with an example: Suppose a man sees a worker searching for metals under the sands of a beach using a metal detector and is amazed by the device's accuracy and its ability to inform about what is buried; he buys one himself and starts using it to search for plastic and wooden items buried underground! When he finds nothing, he says, "There is no wood or plastic on this beach because I used this device which proved its efficiency in finding lost items and found nothing!" It is clear that this man has made a significant error in using the device outside its intended field.

Imagine that - due to his admiration for the device - he went a step further and said: There is no wood or plastic in existence because every time I used this device, I found nothing, and I do not believe in anything else!

His error this time is not in his absolute trust in these devices after proving their efficiency in detecting metals, but in his limitation of knowledge sources to these devices only; thus, making them the sole source of knowledge!

A metal detector, despite its efficiency in its field, does not detect everything in the world!

Some people, in their enthusiasm for empirical science, commit a similar mistake; they say they will only believe what they see with their own eyes and that empirical science is their sole pursuit to uncover any truth! By doing this, they do injustice to empirical science and misunderstand its function while thinking they are following and supporting it.

## Critique of Excess in Empirical Science

The excess in empirical science is an undeniable reality, given the specific term: scientism.

Scientism is a scientific approach that confines sources of knowledge and methods of reasoning to experimentation, observation, and sensory perception, considering this the only and highest gate of knowledge, exalted more than anything else!

These extremists, having claimed that knowledge is confined to empirical science and that it alone answers all of life's mysteries, concluded that other sciences and methods of knowledge do not constitute science and do not produce knowledge.

The contemporary atheistic movement found its cause in this direction, adapting it to support its stance. Thus, the new atheists greatly venerate empirical science and exaggerate its capabilities beyond its limits; and it is true when someone said: If nature is the atheist's god, then natural science is his holy scripture, which falsehood cannot approach from before it or from behind it!

As a result, they claimed that empirical science has nullified all justifications for belief in the existence of the Creator, exalted be He; since evidence is limited to empirical scientific proofs, and anything not subject to experiments is not science. Since religion is not based on scientific experiments, it is - in their claim - merely an illusion.

What concerns us now is to examine this broad claim: Is knowledge confined to empirical science, and is it the only path leading to certain knowledge?

Certainly not, and this claim is nothing but a significant error, which becomes evident in five aspects:

**The first aspect:** Empirical science has clear boundaries it cannot cross, and divine demands, the validity of religion, and the proof of metaphysical matters fall outside its limits; it has no authority over them or claims to deny them.

As I mentioned earlier, empirical science operates within a framework and has boundaries it cannot surpass. If it ventures beyond these limits, it becomes incapacitated, and true specialists in empirical science fully understand this.

To illustrate the matter with an example: Suppose we found a plate of food in front of a house, and we took it to be analyzed by a group of the world's top scientists; nutritional scientists would inform us about the caloric content of the food, biochemists about the elements that make it up and how they are connected, while physicists have the ability to analyze it according to elementary particles, and mathematicians' role would be to present a set of equations describing the behavior of these molecules.

Let's assume I asked these experts collectively: Who made the food? Why was it made? What is the purpose of placing it in front of the door? Is this act right or wrong? They would not be able to answer! Because their specialties revolve around the nature of the food, that is, answering "how" questions, and they cannot answer "why" questions.

Thus, natural science can answer—at its utmost reach—how natural laws work but cannot answer the question: Why do these laws work? This question is beyond the scope of the empirical method's capability.

Hence, it becomes clear that it falls short of explaining all phenomena, demonstrating its need for other complementary sciences, and most importantly, the need for divine revelation sent down by the All-Knowing, exalted be He.

Consider examples of the reality of empirical science and its inability to encompass everything:

**Firstly**, empirical science cannot provide moral judgments: What are human rights? What are animal rights? Are "abortion, euthanasia, rape, cheating, bribery" acceptable acts or not? Empirical science will not give you the answer. It helps us describe how the world works but cannot provide any moral judgment on right or wrong, or on beauty or ugliness. Thus, considering the empirical method as the only way to truth while denying everything else necessarily leads to the denial of moral judgments! What remains for us, humanity, after such chaos?

**Secondly**, empirical science cannot offer aesthetic judgments related to tastes: Is that painting beautiful? Is the sound of a bird pleasant? Are the poems of Al-Mutanabbi delightful? Empirical science does not answer this! It helps us explain how we perceive sounds and how we visualize colors, but it cannot provide any aesthetic judgment.

**Thirdly**, empirical science cannot dictate how to employ scientific knowledge. For example, empirical science has helped explain how DNA hybridization works, but it does not clarify how to direct this acquired knowledge; should we use it to treat genetic diseases or to create biological weapons? You will find empirical science silent and unspoken in this regard! It helps describe how the world functions, and we decide how to utilize the acquired knowledge. In other words, it cannot guide us on which behavior to choose in our lives. This science informs us—to some extent—about what exists, without advising us on what "should be."

**Fourthly**, empirical science cannot explain the metaphysical - the realm of the unseen or metaphysics - such as the existence of angels, jinn, and the afterlife, and will not judge these matters;

because they fall outside the scope of the perceivable natural world and the domain of empirical science is confined to it; i.e., to what is observable and experimentable. No empirical science has the right to encroach upon the realm of the unseen; because the hand of sensory experiment is too short to extend beyond nature to affirm or deny anything from it.

The second aspect: The claim that knowledge is confined to empirical science refutes itself, or as it is said: it is self-refuting! Because this claim is based on a philosophical stance, not on empirical science. How can one believe that truth can only be reached through the empirical method alone, while this truth itself was not arrived at using the empirical method? Meaning, their statement that empirical science is the only means to reach the truth is logically false; because it is not the result of an experiment; if this statement were to be accurate, then empirical science would be invalid!

**The third aspect:** Atheists themselves acknowledge that empirical science does not possess the strength they might deceive the ignorant with. Even Stephen Hawking, the famous atheist physicist, says, "Any physical theory is always provisional, in the sense that it is just a hypothesis; you can never prove it. No matter how many times the results of experiments agree with some theory, you can never be sure that the next time the result will not contradict the theory." Thus, the claim that scientific theories are always certain is, by their own admission, not correct.

It further clarifies that not all scientific theories are certain because they often change; how can it be claimed that scientific theories prevalent today are certain, when they may become obsolete in a year or two?

Natural scientists agree that scientific knowledge is always changing, and very few things are certain and constant. The scientific knowledge used today might become obsolete tomorrow, and older scientific books are mostly of little benefit. Many used bookstores avoid buying used scientific books, and many publishers of university textbooks make it a practice to release a new, updated edition of each scientific course every three years. This rapid pace of scientific discovery can radically change our understanding and interpretation of natural science within a few years.

**The fourth aspect:** Natural sciences are not of equal strength; some are stronger than others. Natural sciences are usually described as "hard sciences," but what is often overlooked or ignored is that some natural sciences have a "softer" underside, including their historicity. The theories proposed by natural sciences to explain the origin of natural phenomena (like dinosaurs, continents, planets) are largely historical and not experimental, focusing on a unique, non-repetitive event that cannot be experimented with or replicated in a laboratory.

Thus, deceiving the ignorant into thinking that all natural sciences are uniformly strong is a major fallacy. The truth is that they vary in degrees; some are merely scientific hypotheses, some are theories, and some are facts. Some can undergo direct sensory experimentation, while others are speculative interpretations of natural phenomena.

**The fifth aspect:** Ways to prove the external existence of things are not limited to sensory perception and testing. Many truths that experimental scientists themselves believe in and base their discoveries on have not been proven through sensory experience. They accept the validity of some hypotheses that cannot be sensed directly. No one can claim to have seen a proton or an electron, yet people recognize their effects. The same applies to the composition

of atoms and their properties, as well as to the structure of distant celestial bodies and the vast distances between them, which we cannot subject to our experiments or establish direct evidence for our theories and hypotheses about them.

Therefore, many of today's accepted natural laws have not undergone experimentation; we believe in them because of their observed effects.

Additionally, much of today's scientific opinion is an interpretation of observations and not the product of laboratory experiments. Scientists may observe a particular behavior in the universe and interpret it in a specific way; this interpretation is not experimental but deductive and inferential. As more evidence supports this interpretation, it strengthens into a theory or scientific fact, though it may remain conjectural or even be discarded after a while.

These five aspects demonstrate that empirical science is one of the paths to knowledge, not the only path, and empirical scientific theories cannot all be described as certain; many are conjectural or speculative.

**It There a Conflict between Empirical Science and Belief in Allah?**

Certainly not. This is a broad atheistic claim that lacks evidence. Atheists allege a conflict between the two, suggesting one must choose between empirical science and faith in the Creator.

Their claim is addressed from four perspectives:

**The first perspective:** It should initially be reminded that empirical scientists are humans and not always objective. They are influenced by their surrounding environment, including its culture, politics, economics, etc. Therefore, the surrounding culture

profoundly influences the conclusions of scientists regarding these scientific theories. The culture surrounding many scientists today is secular and atheistic, embellishing the acceptance of scientific theories that oppose religion, such as the theory of evolution. That some scientists have accepted these theories and pretended they are correct is due more to psychological or social reasons than to scientific ones. This was acknowledged by the atheist British zoologist, Professor D. M. S. Watson, who said, "The theory of evolution is widely accepted not because it can be proven logically through stringent evidence but because it is the only alternative; obviously, special creation cannot be believed."

**The second perspective:** Not all scientists specializing in empirical sciences are atheists, nor even the majority; rather, the opposite is true. Many scientists believe in the existence of the Creator. If there were a real conflict between empirical science and faith in the Creator, simple logic would dictate that all empirical scientists would be atheists, and believers would be from other disciplines. But this is not the case. Many of the great empirical scientists throughout the centuries believed in the Creator and were not atheists, such as Bacon, Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Maxwell, and Faraday. These pillars of empirical science did not see any conflict with faith in the Creator; indeed, many of them considered belief in Allah their main motivation for pursuing scientific research. A Western researcher named Shalev authored a book published in America in 2005 titled "One Hundred Years of Nobel Prizes," examining the conditions of scientists who won the Nobel Prize in the 20th century. He concluded that only seven percent of them were atheists.

**The third perspective:** Atheists attempt to deceive people into believing that empirical science has been in fierce conflict with religion throughout history, concluding with the victory

of empirical science over religion. This claim is not true. While some Christian clerics opposed some scientific theories during the Renaissance, the opposition of some scientists to faith in the Creator does not mean that science itself is at war with belief in the Creator. If there were dark points in the history of the Catholic Church at certain times, this does not apply to Islamic history. The Quran encourages contemplation and reflection on the heavens and the earth and the use of reason. Muslims in the early centuries paid great attention to sound empirical science without opposition from scholars of Sharia.

**The fourth perspective:** Empirical science indicates the existence of the Creator rather than atheism. One of the strongest rational sensory arguments for the existence of the Creator is the cosmological argument or the argument from creation, as well as the teleological argument. Both depend on empirical science.

In conclusion, the atheistic claim that empirical science opposes belief in the Creator is baseless. In truth, the opposite is correct.

## The Relationship Between Islam and Natural (Empirical) Science

I'll attempt to summarize this relationship through five questions and their answers:

**First Question:** Is Islam in conflict with empirical science?

Answer: Absolutely not. The alleged clash exists only in the minds of those who fabricated this myth. Let's not forget that Muslims were masters in this field in the past, with the West traveling to them to learn. Islam opposes only what is incorrect or harmful. Conversely, it encourages learning what is beneficial.

**Second Question:** Does Islam indicate everything that natural science brings forth?

Answer: No; Revelation is not a physics or geology textbook. It is greater and more noble, though it contains references that refute the alleged conflict. Other aspects are not addressed and not contradicted.

**Third Question:** Does natural science indicate Islam?

Answer: Not all of it, but many aspects support the revelation and prove its truth.

**Fourth Question:** Does Islam have authority over natural science?

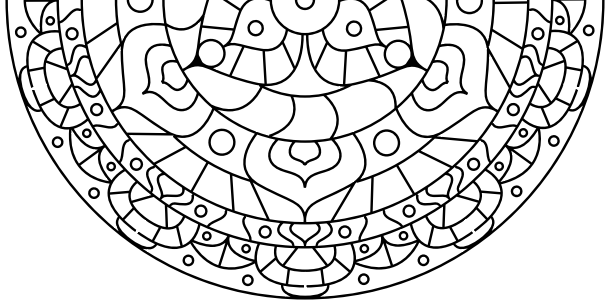
Answer: Yes; every scientific inquiry falls under one of the five Islamic legal rulings. Our belief as Muslims is that revelation dominates everything else, serving as the crucial point from which we deal with everything and the ultimate reference for all knowledge and existence.

**Fifth Question:** Does empirical science have authority over Islam?

Answer: Certainly not; Islam's source is divine revelation, not of earthly material origin but descended from heaven, from Allah, the Wise, the Well-Acquainted. Thus, empirical science lacks the competence to judge it.

## For further reading

I particularly recommend a delightful and informative book to as adults and young people, which clears many of the doubts that might nest in some people's minds about the conflict between science and Islam. The book is titled "1001 Inventions," detailing inventions that emerged through Muslims, highlighting an important part of their heritage.



# Chapter Twenty-Six: Between Perfection and Chance

An excessive belief in the powers of chance is a foundation of contemporary atheism; it's not hidden how much this trend affects the young Muslims. It's also evident that some of them may fall for the fallacies of atheists on this topic; like their saying: "The universe came from nothing by chance; therefore, it doesn't have to have a creator!"

This statement could confuse those who are not knowledgeable about its error; this is what prompts us to address this topic.

## Chance, and Rules for Proper Understanding

What is meant by chance in people's speech: a description of what happens by incidents and improvisation, without will or known cause, or without agreement or anticipation, or without ability or skill.

To understand it away from the misguidance of the misled, here are ten rules:

1. We explain by chance an event from the aspect of it being

unarranged or unintended by us, not that we acknowledge this event has no cause. Meaning: We might use the word chance to express our ignorance of the direct causes or intentions of events, not because something happens without a cause.

2. Chance is merely a negative, non-existent descriptor, and it does not possess any existential attribute; thus, attributing any act or effect to it is nonsensical; nonexistence does not establish existence. Therefore, when someone attributes creation from nothingness to chance, they have delved into illusion or deception.

3. The existence of something without a cause is intellectually impossible, and it has no relation to chance; and those who think this falls under chance should know that it's an imaginary, impossible occurrence.

4. What occurs by chance does not always or mostly happen; repetition and chance are opposites. For example, one might say: "I met someone today in the market by chance" - meaning without prior arrangement - but it is not acceptable to meet him every day and say: "This happened by chance!"

5. We must differentiate between what's in the mind and what's in reality; what's conceivable in the mind may be impossible outside it. The mind might conceive things, but in reality, their occurrence is impossible; for instance, one might imagine an infinite number of cars, but in reality, an infinite number of cars do not exist. Understanding this reveals several atheistic fallacies.

6. The criterion in realistic judgments is based on real impossibility or possibility, not on intellectual impossibility or possibility; for instance, if you took from me a grain of sand with a distinctive color, and went with it to a place I don't know and threw it there, maybe in the Empty Quarter or the Nevada desert or the

South Pole or an uninhabited island beach in the Indian Ocean or next to my house, then I took a plane and flew randomly in the world searching for it, then landed somewhere, and as soon as I searched with my fingertip in the sand, the grain is in front of me, from the first attempt! Is this realistically possible or impossible? It is impossible, and anyone claiming this would be accused of lying or madness, although it's not impossible intellectually, but the criterion is in the judgments on real possibility.

7. Pure chance does not exist in a world created by an All-Knowing, Almighty Lord. Whenever fate is present, chance is negated; nothing in the world happens randomly. Meaning: It's okay to describe something as happening by chance due to our ignorance and lack of knowledge, and the reality is that it has a cause, but we are unaware of it or did not arrange for it. However, for something to happen purely by chance is impossible; everything is predetermined, and Allah Almighty has created and precisely determined everything.

8. Chance can answer the question of "how," but it cannot answer the question of "who." Meaning: If you asked me: How did the accident happen? I might say: By chance. But if you asked me: Who hit you in the accident? It makes no sense to say: Chance!

9. What was expected, or the result of known causes is not described as happening by chance.

10. Do not attribute chance to things where signs of intent and care are apparent. For example, if I told you that I randomly threw stones behind me, then turned around to find that they had formed a beautifully structured room with precise angles! Your response would be: Your statement is madness! And if you saw a dent in my car and asked me, and I said: A huge rock hit my car by chance! This statement is acceptable. But if you

saw it repaired the next day and asked me, and I told you: The repair happened by chance! This statement is unacceptable; because repair requires a cause and care, craftsmanship and skill, a deliberate action; hence, chance here is not an acceptable answer.

## Perfection and Precision in This Universe

No sane person doubts that the universe is perfected and precise, and by its being perfected, it means the regulation of its system and everything happening in its correct course. This is definitive proof of the existence of the Great Creator, glorified be He; for the existence of creations after their nonexistence is proof of their Creator's existence, and their being created with such precision, excellence in perfection, and marvel in precision is also proof of His existence, glorified be He. This is what scholars call the argument of providence, the argument of specification, or the argument of order.

Everything in the universe is placed in a stunning manner, aligning with human interests and benefits, everything is governed by a precise system it follows. And a rational person deduces things by their effects; so, whoever finds a well-made device where every part is placed in its position for a specific purpose will necessarily know that behind this precision is an ingenious maker.

As for randomness, or what has no power, knowledge, or wisdom, it produces nothing, let alone being well-made and having a specific function it performs. And whoever contemplates this world properly will certainly know that its Creator - glorified be He - has perfected it to the utmost, and this is what the verses of the scripture guided us to. The Almighty said: {Who perfected everything He created} *[Al-Sajdah: 7]*, and He said: {The work of

Allah, Who perfected everything} *[Al-Naml: 88]*, and He said, glorious and exalted: {Our Lord is He who gave everything its creation and then guided it} *[Ta Ha: 50]*, and He said, glorified be He: {And created everything and determined it with *[precise]* determination} *[Al-Furqan: 2]*.

Contemporary scientific discoveries have revealed many cosmic proofs of this, becoming one of the strongest tangible pieces of evidence of the necessity of the Creator's existence, glorified be He, and have increased our knowledge of Him, faith in Him, and veneration for Him. To realize this, just a glance at the outputs of biology, physics, chemistry, geology, anatomy, astronomy, or other sciences is enough.

So, what should I talk to you about? About the precise ratios in regulating air and gases scattered throughout the universe! Or about the precise distance between us and the sun, which if altered slightly, would make the Earth colder than Mars or hotter than Venus, complicating life! Shall I tell you about the atmosphere which, by Allah's grace, prevents millions of deadly meteors from reaching us! Or about the sea water covering three-quarters of the Earth, which, if not for Allah's grace, life would have been impossible. Or should I talk to you about Earth's gravity, where the slightest change in its ratio also means life on it would be impossible! Shall I talk to you about the brain, the heart, or the eye? Or shall I leave this and tell you about something exceedingly small we haven't seen: "the atom"; physicists say that if any property of the atom were different, life would likely be impossible!

We are now talking about things of utmost precision, beyond imagination; you should know that the cosmological constant related to the rate of expansion of the universe: scientists say it has a precision beyond imagination; so much so that if the precision of this constant changed faster or slower by just one degree out of

a number that reaches ten raised to the power of one hundred and twenty, life in the universe would have been impossible! Do you see this precision; one out of an unimaginably substantial number, which is: one followed by one hundred and twenty zeros!

Was all this by chance? Or is it the work of Allah who perfected everything?! Every fair-minded person realizes the answer.

To summarize: We have two premises and a conclusion:

**The first premise:** The universe is perfected and created, and the evidence for it is the tangible reality that cannot be doubted.

**The second premise**: Everything that is perfected and precise can only come from an all-knowing, wise, and powerful actor.

**The conclusion**: The universe has an all-knowing, wise, and powerful creator, exalted in His highness.

## The Reason for Atheists' Emphasis on Chance

One of the biggest dilemmas for atheists is their pretense of loving empirical science and rationality while denying the existence of the Creator, glorified be He. This is because empirical science indicates that the universe appeared after it did not exist according to very precise physical laws, and it also indicates the extreme complexity of life. Sound logic requires that complex creatures cannot appear except by a Creator.

From here, atheists resort to emphasizing chance to delude themselves and others with an answer that solves this conundrum: the impossible can happen by chance!

Atheists make chance responsible for the appearance of all creatures, and they have exaggerated its capabilities to the point of nearly worshipping it! Jacques Monod, the French atheist scientist

specialized in medicine, says: "Chance alone is the source of all this innovation in all creatures"!

Richard Dawkins, a proponent of new atheism and a doctor in biology, is one of those who greatly glorifies chance and talks about it, especially in his book: "The Blind Watchmaker." He even decided that it's possible by chance to find a marble statue waving its hand at us suddenly, this is possible although it has a low probability, but it's not impossible! Then he mentioned that with such a weak probability, theoretically, a cow could jump and land on the moon by chance! And based on this, he argued that events that seem impossible - like the appearance of life on Earth - could happen by chance, so they do not require a creator to exist!

We would have to completely abandon our minds if we were to believe the atheists; for what is more impossible than to entertain the possibility - just the possibility - that a rigid statue moves its hand, or that a cow makes a leap only to find itself on the moon's surface! Let alone the appearance of this universe by chance out of nothing.

## Can the Existence of a Perfected Universe Be the Result of Chance as They Claim?

This is utterly false, and refuting it would take extraordinarily long, but I will suffice with seven points:

**Firstly**: Anyone who reflects on the atheists' discourse on chance finds that they sanctify it and attribute to it divine qualities; because they want it to replace the Lord, glorified be He, in explaining the origin of life and its organization; thus, they describe it with the attributes of the Lord capable of everything! And all rational people realize that chance is not an entity that can create anything; in fact, it is not anything in reality, let alone being attributed with

life, power, knowledge, and wisdom; so how can the existence of things be attributed to it?

Atheists prefer to believe in anything except the Lord of the Worlds, glorified be He!

Undoubtedly, the word chance was used by them with fallacy and deception; to divert the ignorant from believing in the existence of a Creator of the universe by directing them to a familiar alternative, which is chance. They are compelled to this behavior because it is impossible to accept the existence of the universe from nothing; they dare not openly admit this; instead, they hide behind what they call chance as an alternative to creation; they throw this word around and move on! Without defining this word or unveiling its reality.

And the question now: Does the word chance allow its use in the way they want?

Looking at people's use of the word chance - as mentioned before - we find that it is used to express one of three things:

1. To express the absence of intention behind an act, as when you meet a friend in the market without an appointment, and say: I met him by chance, meaning without my intention to meet him.
2. To express the existence of intention to perform an act without having the ability or skill; as if a blind person throws a basketball and hits the target, it is said: His hitting the target was by chance, meaning not out of merit or skill.
3. To express the absence of a link between two simultaneous or successive events; as if a stone falls on a car passing by a building being constructed; it is said: The stone hit the car by chance.

It is clear from the use of the word (chance) that it has no relation to what atheists try to make people believe; the expression by chance is limited to the absence of intention, ability, or connection, but it never covers the absence of an actor! So, its use here is misleading to people and deluding them with a reasonable alternative to the question of creation.

In summary: The word chance is not correctly used in creating something out of nothing.

Someone might say: What they mean by their statement: "The universe originated by chance," is that it evolved from a chaotic initial state to the organized state we see today without the need for an organizer, not that it emerged from nonexistence to existence.

The response to that is: They seldom make this distinction, intentionally merging the two issues: creation and organization.

Then, if they meant organization not creation, it is told to them: This diverts the issue from its origin; for bringing existence from nonexistence is greater than bringing an organized existence from a disorganized one, so why did you leave the core of the issue and its most significant aspect and cling to the other? Meaning: Before you talk about the organization of the universe; answer us: What is the cause of the existence of the universe? And most of them will, reluctantly, return to the previous futile answer: It existed by chance!

**Secondly**: If we overlook that and move on to discuss what exists after the universe's existence, and their claim that chance is responsible for the precision and harmony in this universe, it is said: All rational people realize that what happens by chance is random, not organized; complexity and order are contrary to chance and randomness.

**Thirdly**: Atheists confuse people by describing the impossible as something possible with a very slim chance of occurring, and all rational people understand that a cow jumping to the moon! Or a marble statue moving its hand, or a bunch of papers thrown during a tornado forming a paper house: these are things impossible to happen, and believing in the possibility of these events happening is absurd, and the matter is clearer than to be elaborated upon.

**Fourthly**: Contemporary atheists concede to the fact that this known universe and everything in it has a specific beginning, which includes the start of life on this Earth being also bound to a specific period, and cannot be given an unlimited time; even if we were to argue that chance is an acting force; the time is too short for chance to be the real cause! Take, for example, Dawkins - the leading contemporary atheist - says: "Just give time for unlimited opportunities, and anything can happen"; this is a fallacious argument; there is nothing such as unlimited time, or unlimited opportunities in this universe.

The fact that the appearance of life on Earth has a temporal beginning poses a major problem for them!

**Fifthly**: When atheists assert the possibility of life appearing on Earth by chance; they contradict both empirical science and sound logic, aside from every effect having a cause, and chance does not cause; claiming the possibility of life appearing on Earth by chance is false, because this appearance must consider various complex aspects:

**The first aspect**: Before life appeared on Earth, it had to be habitable in the first place, and for it to be habitable, it had to meet a series of specified physical criteria, without which the universe would not be habitable. Astrophysical scientists have stated that twenty-six physical parameters must be finely tuned for life to

possibly emerge anywhere in the universe. Who fine-tuned these parameters? Was it also chance?!

**The second aspect**: Living beings are made of cells, cells are composed of proteins, proteins are composed of amino acids, and proteins are very complexly structured, making their existence by chance impossible. One physicist says, "Creating a protein simply by pumping energy is like exploding a stick of dynamite under a pile of bricks, expecting a house to appear!"

**The third aspect**: Proteins interact with DNA, which is one of the most important components of the cell that stores information, and the appearance of DNA by chance is also among the absolute impossibilities.

**The fourth aspect**: DNA is not the only component in the cell; there are other components that must be present; a cell is more like a miniature factory operating with thousands of parts. Dr. Michael Denton, an Australian molecular biologist, mentioned that the smallest bacterial cell - weighing less than a trillionth of a gram - is a true miniature factory, containing thousands of beautifully working parts as complex molecular machines!

These are four aspects of many for life formation, and we notice well that the appearance of each of these four aspects by chance is impossible, and if we consider them all together, we know it's extremely impossible.

**Sixthly**: The issue is not just about the existence of the universe from nothing, nor just about its precision; but also, about its continuous precision and non-decay.

Meaning: Assuming, for the sake of argument, that the universe came into existence by a random stroke of luck - which is the farthest from possibilities - where did its system's coherence come from;

why didn't it rapidly deteriorate? Why didn't chaos spontaneously ensue as well?! And who keeps it from vanishing?

Was chance - itself - this time the capable, merciful one who tenderly maintains the system of this universe for centuries extended? Did chance reconcile with its enemy - I mean continuity and repetition - for our sake?! Are there minds that accept such nonsense?!

**Seventhly**: The last people who should speak such nonsense are the materialistic atheists; they have wearied us by denying everything not proven through sensation and experience; so, it is said to them: Where do you get that the universe existed by chance? And where do you get that the creativity within it existed by chance? And in which laboratory did you evaluate this to arrive at this conclusion?

Aren't you the ones who adhere strictly to the materialistic philosophy that denies everything not proven by sense and experience?

Aren't you the ones who denied the existence of the Almighty, the Forbearing, glorified be He, and the existence of the unseen for its sake?

Then apply your methodology to the issue of chance and the origin of the universe; then let us know!

"He who is content with his own path should lead by example!"

Well; I will not burden you with proving the beginning of the universe, but I will ask you to prove to us experimentally anything that came from nothing by chance without a cause!

And I will not burden you by asking for mountains, seas, or animals; prove that a car existed from nothing by chance!

Or prove that a mobile phone came into existence from nothing by chance!

Or even prove that a cup of coffee came into existence from nothing by chance!

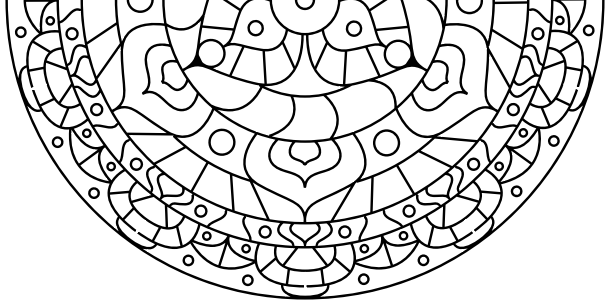
All Right; leave all the above; and prove with a scientific sensory experiment that even a single grain of sand came into existence from nothing by chance!

I believe we will be waiting a long time, and we will not find an answer!

## *For further benefit*

I recommend two things:

1. Reading a particularly important section on the perfection in this universe from the book "Miftah Dar al-Sa'adah" (-539/2 794) from the edition published by Dar al-Alam al-Fawaid.
2. Checking out a five-minute video produced by the Yaqeen Committee for Critiquing Atheism and Irreligion, titled: "Dalil al-Af'al: Hal al-Sudfah Awjadat al-Kawn?" Available online.



# Chapter Twenty-Seven: The Theory of Evolution on the Scale

Here we are faced with an important and significant subject, as the theory of evolution is a cornerstone of contemporary atheistic philosophy, and some Muslims mistakenly believe in its correctness, despite the substantial scientific and rational fallacies it contains. This calls us to examine it.

The subject is scientifically profound and broad, and I will try to summarize and simplify it as much as possible.

## Introduction to the Theory of Evolution

The theory of evolution is a well-known theory. I don't think there is anyone who hasn't heard of it. It was founded by Charles Darwin, based on discoveries he noted from natural phenomena he observed during a long sea voyage aboard the "Beagle," leading him to the idea that these animals gradually evolved from one being to another. This culminated in his famous book "On the Origin

of Species" in 1859, followed by his second book "The Descent of Man" in 1871.

The essence of the theory is that living beings share a single origin; a single-celled organism, which then evolved and advanced, forming various animal species over time. This evolution is based on the law of natural selection.

This theory has been accepted by many Western academics, despite its profound weaknesses, as will be discussed, and has been celebrated by atheists in a manner no other theory has.

## The Theory of Evolution: Scientific Fact or Critiqued Hypothesis?

In reality, this theory - which I refer to as such due to its fame - is closer to being a dream cherished by its proponents rather than a scientific theory capable of empirical verification, much less a scientific fact.

Despite being over a hundred and sixty years old, not a single correct proof has been provided for the transition of one type of living organism into another (not to be confused with evolution within the same species).

Thousands of tons of rocks have been excavated without finding any transitional fossils between species of living organisms.

There are millions of species of living organisms on Earth - excluding those extinct - and not single scientific evidence in the fossil record proves evolution, suggesting that all organisms have a single common ancestor.

Not a single peer-reviewed scientific paper has proven the emergence of a new genetic code for a specialized functional protein from outside the gene pool of any species.

After this, are we not entitled to say that it is a hypothetical fantasy rather than a scientific fact or even a theory?

Scientific advancements over the years only add to its weaknesses and problems.

Many atheistic evolutionists who have discovered this bitter truth include Dr. Michael Denton, a genetics expert, who in 1985 authored a book critiquing it titled "Evolution: A Theory in Crisis"! He concluded that the theory is not just like undercooked food, but rather food that was never cooked in the first place, then forced upon others to eat!

Interestingly, thirty years later in 2015, he authored another book titled "Evolution: Still a Theory in Crisis"! In it, he elaborated that the problems with the theory had increased!

## Brief Criticism Points

Since this theory was introduced to the public until today, it has faced fierce criticism from many scientists across different disciplines due to its profound weaknesses and the numerous gaps it contains.

Covering all aspects of its criticism is beyond the scope of this brief space; hence, I will only mention a few concise points:

## First: The Inability to Prove

Despite the great aura that atheists have bestowed upon this theory, it still remains a hypothesis! There are many obstacles it faces:

- The first issue is that the claimed evolution cannot be observed or experimented with, and evolutionists have not been - and

will not be - able to present a single instance of evolution that underwent testing and experimentation.

It's strange that its atheistic supporters claim to follow the scientific method, which fundamentally asserts that knowledge of reality can only be obtained through scientific experiments.

They criticize the religious for not following this method, yet they themselves violate it!

In summary, the theory suggests that the survival of a living being was due to natural selection; what is the experimental scientific evidence that it was selected? What proves it survived solely because of selection? Why couldn't there be another reason for its survival? Their answer: No answer!

- The second issue is that this theory is riddled with gaps and loopholes that have not been filled to this day.

Among these are the missing transitional forms; fossils have not revealed anything of the sort.

Also, the lack of mutations in nature, as there is not a single real-world example of a natural mutation, even for a single cell, let alone for a single functional molecule within a cell!

Furthermore, the existence of organs of utmost precision; Darwin himself acknowledged the eye, with its extreme precision and complexity, stating that the belief it formed through natural progression "seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest possible degree." This is his exact wording in "On the Origin of Species" p.293.

These many gaps led Darwin himself to frequently express doubt and skepticism about his theory in his book, with some scholars counting more than 800 sentences of doubt!

- The third issue is the overwhelming real-world evidence that contradicts the hypothesis of evolution; living beings' composition speaks of precision and mastery, not chance and randomness. Against this evident truth, the theory clearly appears invalid. The experimental scientist "Clouts" rightly said, "Belief in evolution requires a lot of naivety."

## Second: The Flawed Methodology of Reasoning and Conclusion.

This is evident in the following:

### 1. Overreliance on imagination and intuition.

Since evolutionists have not found clear fossils or complete organs to support their theory, they resorted to imagination and guesswork, making it their primary reliance, building "mountains out of molehills," which is a clear methodological flaw.

For example, in 1922, a fossilized tooth was found in Nebraska, USA, claimed to have characteristics shared between humans and apes. Based on this tooth, they drew a skull and body for its owner, naming it "Nebraska Man," even drawing his wife! All this based on a tooth! Later, it was discovered that the tooth did not belong to a human or an ape but was from an extinct species of American wild pig!

Is such a type of conclusion part of scientific research or is it mere imagination?!

### 2. Reliance on mere resemblance.

Whenever evolutionists find the slightest resemblance in some parts, they take it as proof of gradual evolution and species transition among living beings.

This method is incorrect; resemblance does not necessarily imply evolution or transition. No one has ever claimed an evolutionary similarity between humans and octopuses based on their eyes' resemblance! Would evolutionists say that the similarity in the number of chromosomes between humans and potatoes – humans have 46 and potatoes 48 - indicates an evolutionary link between them? Did you know the genetic similarity between humans and nematode worms is 75%? About 60% of chicken genes have human counterparts? That between humans and fruit flies is 60%? Between humans and mice is higher than 97%? Between humans and bananas is around 50%?!

In conclusion: What evidence is there that a certain percentage of similarity between two beings necessitates a common ancestor?

To put it simply: Does two men wearing the same shoe size necessarily mean they come from the same tribe?!

Does any degree of similarity between a machine gun and a mousetrap necessitate a common ancestor between them?!

Regardless, the occurrence of any degree of similarity between living beings is not surprising for believers; for their Creator is one, exalted be He.

**3. Evolutionists' Fallacy of Circular Reasoning.**

That is, proving the matter with the matter itself, which is a logical fallacy that the wise avoid.

An example of their fallacy is using fossils to prove evolution and depending on evolution to explain fossils!

Meaning, if you ask an evolutionist why two beings are similar, they respond: Because they have a common ancestor. And if you

ask: What's the proof they have a common ancestor? They say: Because they are similar! And so on, in a never-ending loop.

## Third: Invalidity of the Central Principles

This theory is based on two main principles: A- Chance (Random mutations). B- Long-term natural selection.

As for chance, it has already been discussed in the previous chapter, and it has been shown that it does not serve as a scientific explanation for the origin or evolution of the universe.

As for relying on long-term natural selection, it is refuted from two aspects:

1- Lack of Steady Proportionality; since the principle of natural selection and the survival of the fittest of each kind would require that the number of extinct species be vastly greater than the number of existing varieties, yet there is no proof of this; the fossils discovered have not helped them at all.

I mean: If we have millions of species of living organisms today, and considering this number with the time rate of their appearance, a new living organism must emerge every few days, and thousands of mutated organisms must appear every hour, meaning that the intermediate forms should be in the billions, yet fossils have never revealed anything of the sort.

In fact, recent fossils are a significant embarrassing burden for them; due to them, there is a constant need to modify, abbreviate, or change the theory; hence, we have seen more than one version of it.

2- Lack of Temporal Proportionality; there is no correspondence between the claimed evolution and time; the selection or evolution of animals through mutations does not match the time of their

existence on Earth; reaching the modern type of any kind of animals requires much more time than estimated by them.

Moreover, the emergence of intricate complexity through selection is impossible no matter how much time elapses.

This mathematical objection is one of the oldest and most significant objections to the theory; mathematical calculations clearly show the impossibility of the claimed evolution occurring within the time span estimated for the age of the universe.

## Fourth: The Inability to Provide a Biological Explanation

The theory is incapable of explaining many of the fundamental aspects of life, falling short of elucidating them, especially with the observation of what is called irreducible complexity in all aspects of life, which means a system composed of parts that are highly integrated and interconnected, where any change in them leads to the corruption of the system and its deviation from its path.

These irreducibly complex systems are a headache for the theory's proponents; because they are resistant to being produced under its light.

Among the most important biological phenomena that the theory of evolution fails to explain are:

A- The origin of life; evolutionists are utterly unable to offer a logical scientific explanation for the origin of life considering their theory: Where did that first cell come from? And how did inanimate matter with no life transform into a living being?!

I say: Before you talk to us about evolution, talk about origination! The root comes before the branch.

And the origination - by the admission of leading atheists before others - is impossible to explain within the evolutionary view.

Today, yesterday, and tomorrow: There is an unanswered question in evolutionary philosophy: How did life begin on Earth? And how could the universe, which you claim formed from mindless, blind matter, produce entities governed by purposefulness, the ability to reproduce, and encoded chemistry?

If the first question in "Darwinism" is unanswered, how can we look beyond it!

B- The complexity of the living cell; scientific progress has proven that the cell is a world of extreme complexity, to the point it was said: "The cell is as complex as New York City!"; thus, its formation by chance is impossible.

C- Consciousness: Where did it come from?

And how did the operation of biological systems occur? For life and its contents are more comprehensive and complex than mere origination and evolution.

And the operation of the complex organic systems, which is extremely intricate and astonishing: How did it happen?

The theory is incapable of providing an acceptable explanation for this complexity and perfect harmony; it is logically impossible that such a complete system occurred by chance!

Every rational person realizes that any machine must have a maker, and the more complex the machine, the more ingenious its creator!

## Fifth: Its Contradiction with Other Experimental Sciences and Theories.

Take, for example, a recent scientific theory known as the "Minimum Gene Set," which determined that no living organism, no matter how simple, can have fewer than 397 genes. This theory completely undermines the theory of evolution, as it posits that life started with zero genes, then one gene, then two, and so on.

## The Enthusiasm of Atheists for This Theory Despite its Many Weaknesses

This theory is a cornerstone of the atheistic methodology and their "holy book." It is embraced and fervently promoted by atheists, expanding its scope to encompass all aspects of life.

The reason: It is their lifeline! They see it as the only theory that can explain the beginning of creation without needing a creator.

In short, their enthusiasm is driven by the notion that if evolution falls, so does atheism!

Living beings either came into existence through the creation by a creator or through evolution and progression, with no third alternative! They are prepared to accept anything but belief in the Creator, glorified be He.

Interestingly, the famous atheist evolutionist "Dawkins" in a published interview available on YouTube, suggested that the origin of life might have been from technologically advanced beings who seeded it on our planet?! He mentioned it as an exciting hypothesis! Thus, he does not object to life being created by an intelligent agent; he specifically opposes attributing it to the Creator, glorified be He!

Belief in extraterrestrial creators is possible for him, but belief in the Almighty Creator is not! {But he for whom Allah intends fitnah – never will you possess *[power to do]* for him a thing against Allah} *[Al-Ma'idah: 41]*.

Dawkins and his ilk ask: How can we believe in Allah when we have not seen Him! Have you seen extraterrestrial beings?!

Nevermind that; have you seen the first cell?

Have you seen the common ancestor of any living species?

Have you seen random mutations?

Have you evaluated all this in laboratories?

Once again, truthfully said by Allah: {But he for whom Allah intends fitnah – never will you possess *[power to do]* for him a thing against Allah} *[Al-Ma'idah: 41]*.

The reality is that the atheist does not believe because they do not want to believe!

Understanding their enthusiasm for the theory of evolution explains the severe terrorism they practice against anyone who disagrees with them. Dr. Jerry Bergman authored the book "Slaughter of the Dissidents," describing what opponents of the theory face in some scientific circles, based on interviews with three hundred scientists and academics, all of whom bitterly described their experiences due to their disagreement with the theory.

Additionally, some proponents of Intelligent Design produced a documentary titled "Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed" discussing the exclusion in the atheistic scientific community in the West of anyone who objects to the theory. This documentary spread widely, shown in 1,052 theaters in the United States, unprecedented for any documentary before it.

## Final Remarks

**Firstly**: Some people mistakenly think we are discussing a scientific theory that specialist's debate as is the case with any controversial scientific issue; this is a grave mistake.

We are dealing with a belief and philosophy, a myth that seeks to replace revelation, true religion, science, and reason with scientific illusion and manipulation of terms.

Therefore, it is not permissible for a Muslim to take it lightly or attempt to "Islamize" it or bend Shariah and its evidence for it.

The essence of the theory of evolution: the existence of creatures without a creator and purpose, the entire matter is an accident that originated, blind randomness that selected, nothing more!

Thus, it contradicts true religion, sound nature, correct science, and apparent reason; there is no room for any compromise or flattery.

**Secondly**: Another aspect of evolutionary philosophy is social evolution; the theory of evolution has influenced many of its adopters in their views of life, people, and societies. For example, helping the weak is wrong because it contradicts natural selection based on survival of the fittest!

Herbert Spencer, the founder of "Social Darwinism," opposed state intervention in health protection for its citizens because survival should be for the fittest!

All ethics and values clash with the fundamentals of evolution; hence, its clear impact on a significant segment in the West in terms of racial preferences, discrimination based on color, and the belief that one race is superior to another.

And the list goes on regarding ideologies, criminal doctrines, even genocidal wars, all stemming from the dominance of Darwinian culture over those minds.

**Thirdly**: The clear, easy path in the matter of creation, in line with sound nature: A great, wise, and knowledgeable Creator created all creation from nothing, manages their affairs, and is worthy of their worship. The signs of His creation clearly point to Him.

Contemplate this in everything you see of His creation; you will find meticulous craftsmanship!

Contemplate it in the creation of the eye,

In the functioning of the heart,

In blood clotting,

Contemplate it in the creation of the giraffe,

And in the pollination of the orchid flower,

Contemplate it in the DNA strand, an essential information bank!

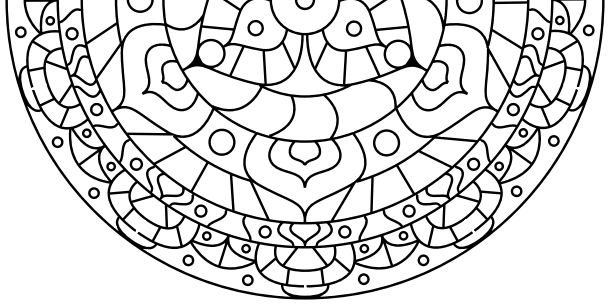
Contemplate it in anything... in everything.

And in everything, there is a sign proving that He is the One.

{We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. Is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness? Indeed, they are in doubt about the meeting with their Lord; indeed, He is encompassing of all things} *[Fussilat: 53 - 54]*.

*For further benefit*

I recommend listening to a seminar conducted by the Yaqeen Committee titled "Nadhariyyat al-Tatawur fi al-Mizan al-Shari' wa al-'Ilm," available online.



# Chapter Twenty-Eight: Atheism: Contradictions and Fallacies

The contemporary atheistic movement's temptation is not one that can be overlooked; the activity of atheists through social media is evident to any observer.

These people employ deceptive tactics, appealing to those with weak knowledge, including logical fallacies; thus, it's essential to be aware of them.

Moreover, this incoherent approach is inherently contradictory, more so than any other intellectual doctrine. The contradiction of a statement is a proof of its corruption to the rational.

Hence, knowing their contradictions increases certainty of their misguidance and awakens the deluded.

I want to highlight that some may ask: Why discuss atheism these days? Has atheism become a significant issue in Muslim societies to deserve focus?

The answer is: Atheism is a deviant thought, and it will remain so, and it will not be empowered by Allah's will; however, the fact that its advocates are active these days is a reality that cannot be denied, and we are in a time when intellectual gates are wide open, without limits.

Then, the discussion about atheism stems from its severe danger and harm, not the number of people affected by it; it is obvious that atheism is the most heinous disbelief and the most atrocious crime ever committed on the face of the earth. Even if only it affects a few, it's enough to ring alarm bells; for the corruption of one apple indicates that the climate is conducive to spoiling others!

Therefore, it is necessary to be alert and to warn, to understand and to enlighten, to be aware and to caution.

## The Reality of Humanity under the Shadow of Atheistic Belief

In short: Humans are living matter, crafted by randomness with a stroke of luck! They lived to die, and they die to nothing! Thus, there is no hope, no purpose, no happiness, no love, no meaning, no value; only wandering, emptiness, nihilism, and darkness, and nothing exists but mute matter and blind randomness; emptiness, then extinction!

Atheism is a conception that humans cannot live with, and belief in Allah alone makes life meaningful; because it gives it a purpose, as well as a purpose after death. Humans cannot live in this life without a purpose.

In atheism, humans have no value or virtue; they and the mouse, the ant, and the bacteria are of the same value! The only difference is in the extent of the gene pool; it's a difference in quantity, not in quality!

The brief history of humanity: that it was a single-cell organism that randomly evolved into a fish, then ascended to an animal lesser than a monkey, then evolved to become a human, so it is, in any case, an animal among other animals!

What value does a human have if they lose divine honor and the subjugation of everything in the universe for them?! Absolutely no value.

If the dignity of human life in the atheistic view is merely an illusion; what makes their life more noble than that of a dog or a mosquito?!

What prevents disposing of the elderly who are non-productive, or children with disabilities, or at least using them as fields for medical experiments?!

## The Meaning of Fallacy and Why Atheists Use It

A fallacy, or logical fallacy, is a deceptive argument. It is a false argument that dresses up as a valid one. Among the tactics and methodologies atheists use in argumentation and discussion is the reliance on dialectical fallacy and deception to ensnare the simple-minded and to dodge any obligations during their debates.

In doing this, they completely disregard the proper scientific method in dialogue.

## Examples of Atheist Fallacies

One of their intellectual deceits and confusions is that if a Muslim debate them, explaining the law of causality and that every event must have a cause, the atheist nonsensically asks: If we accept

that Allah created everything, then who created Allah? And why doesn't the law of causality apply to Him as well?

This is a corrupt question; the atheist concedes that there is a Creator, then asks: Who created Him?! This makes Him both a creator and a creation in the same sentence! It's a clear contradiction to basic rationality; because a creator cannot be a creation, just as a creation cannot be a creator.

Meaning, people of faith say: The universe is an something that started to exist, and everything that started to exist must have a cause. If the cause of the thing that started to exist is also something that started to exist, then this second thing must also have a cause, and so on to the third and fourth, etc. But this means that the occurrence of the event is dependent on an infinite number of caused causes, which means it would never occur! Therefore, the existence of things that started to exist must have an eternal, uncaused cause.

Then the atheist returns saying: Why don't we ask about it as we do about events: Who caused it?!

It's an extremely foolish question; because if the Creator is eternal and not caused, there's no room to question His origin!

Nothing caused Him, because He has existed eternally (without a beginning).

And if they ask: What's the proof that He is eternal? We say: The existence of events that would not have occurred if they depended on a cause like themselves; the existence of events is proof of an uncaused Creator.

Among their fallacies: **Reification of abstract concepts**, which is treating something abstract and non-material as something material.

They materialize abstracts deceptively! They say nature selects suitable beings, choosing the strongest! Is nature an existing entity characterized by knowledge, power, and wisdom to do this?

Among their fallacies: **Begging the question**, which means making the conclusion a premise, and the problem a solution.

For example, when an atheist is told: The universe is intricately designed, and precision contradicts randomness; they reply: But we see precise things that came about randomly; when asked: What are they? They say: This universe; we see it's precise, and it came from randomness!

Notice that the atheist's task is to prove that the universe came about randomly, yet they reply: My evidence that the universe came about randomly is that the universe came about randomly!

This is something no fair-minded person would accept.

Among their fallacies: **Evasion**; you find the atheist, to falsely prove the theory of evolution, saying: We see living beings evolving; bacteria gain immunity against antibiotics; this is evolution!

In reality, this is evasion; what they talk about as evolution is not the theory of evolution! The theory of evolution posits the transition of a living being from one kind to another; a fish evolving into a bird, for example, while evolution within the same kind is not even the subject of discussion; the bacteria that acquired immunity remains bacteria and did not become a fly, and a child who grows up remains a human and does not become an elephant or an alien being!

And perhaps you find them saying: If there is not enough scientific observational evidence for the theory of evolution now, it will be proven later!

This is an excellent example of evasion! Evidence, to the rational, precedes the claim, but for atheists: decide whatever you want, no problem; the evidence will come later!

Thus, let knowledge be!

Among their fallacies: **Ignoring the issue**; the dialogue with an atheist is about one thing, and suddenly they jump to another.

You ask about the creator of the universe; they answer about the laws of nature and the interaction of matter; ignoring the topic of discussion, which is who, and they talk about how!

If I asked you: How was the car made? And you answered: "According to the laws of mechanics"; the answer is correct. But if I asked you who made it? And you answered: "It was made by the laws of mechanics"! Your answer, to the rational, is wrong; laws explain what happens, they do not create or make.

Among their fallacies is that they strive to cover the weaknesses of the atheistic approach through a fierce attack on Islam, and in their criticism, they deceive; they blatantly lie about it, confuse between what is established in it and what is not, the correct and incorrect.

Or they criticize it, and what they criticize are merely concepts of some heretical sects alien to Islam.

Or they criticize it, and what they criticize are merely individual interpretations of a specific person, then generalize the judgment on the entire religion.

And it's odd that many of them attack Islam while admitting their ignorance of it!

## Atheists' Contradictions

Contradiction is the coexistence of a thing and its opposite. This characteristic is inherent in every false religion and corrupt thought. If you happen to read any of the atheists' assertions, you will find yourself facing a torrent of absurd and flimsy contradictions. The truth is that humanity has never witnessed contradictions with oneself as those of denying the existence of the Creator, glorified be He; as this denial is a stubborn defiance of reason and the observable reality, besides leading to a conflict with all beings that testify, through their existence and state, contrary to what they claim.

First among these is the conflict with the sound natural disposition (fitrah), for the fitrah attests to the existence of a Creator of the universe, while atheism denies His existence! Here, the atheist falls into self-contradiction; as humans are naturally thinkers, reliant on the sequencing of events, and believe that all the products and innovations they see every day did not come about by chance; so how can they accept that the universe, its heavens, earth, plants, and inhabitants came from nothing and arose by chance?!

Furthermore, just as the fitrah acknowledges the origination of every event, it also recognizes its end. Humans witness cessation every day through death, as they see origination through life. This duality compels the self to acknowledge human dependency on another, showing the existence of a Sustainer that cannot be ignored.

In summary, atheism's dilemma lies in its self-contradiction, incorrect linking of things, and blatant defiance of reason and natural disposition.

On another note, the atheist contradicts the fitrah by denying the existence of good and evil and considering them as concepts agreed

upon by humans. This causes the natural disposition to suffer from scientific and moral confusion, as well as ambiguity in discerning right from wrong; hence, an atheist cannot convince another atheist about an ethical or social issue; as each has their understanding of ethics, right, and wrong that differs from the other!

It becomes even more peculiar when they use what is termed "the problem of evil" to deny the existence of Allah; this is astonishing. For the atheist, there is only the material, and things are but scattered atoms that collided to accidentally form this universe! Thus, morals are relative, there is no intrinsic good or evil, and everything goes ahead in blind, aimless disorder; so how can they then argue from the presence of evil!

And what exactly is their standard for evil? There is no standard unless the atheist admits that there is a Lord who has instilled in hearts a natural disposition that distinguishes between right and wrong, good and evil. According to atheistic principles, everything is the same; there is no difference between feeding an orphan and putting a bullet in his head!

Moreover, an atheist's argument using the problem of evil indicates a misconceived understanding of Allah; to conceive of Allah as a Creator, vast in knowledge and wisdom, possessing power and dignity, acting as He wills, and decreeing as He pleases, with all being subservient to Him, is something they either do not understand or refuse to understand!

Their extremely simplistic concept of Allah is that of a machine or servant - exalted is Allah above such notions.

A machine that performs tasks it is "programmed" for, or a servant who obeys orders, doing nothing but fulfilling the desires of creation. Thus, if someone experiences the slightest discomfort,

they cry out: There is no Lord; for if there were, life would not be embittered!

This is the atheists' concept of Allah; glorified be Allah above what they describe[13].

Among the contradictions of atheists is their consideration of religion, especially Islam, as the cause of wars in the world.

The question is: Merely by the absence of religion from people's lives and their denial of the existence of the Creator, does the world become prosperous and secure?

What would an atheist say if we told them that the biggest murderers in history were atheists! Was "Mao Zedong" - the most notorious killer in history, who killed at least fifty million people - a Muslim? He was an atheist!

Was "Stalin," who killed thirty-four million, a Muslim? He was an atheist!

Was "Hitler," who caused the deaths of millions - between nine to twenty million - a Muslim? He was irreligious!

Was "Lenin," who killed four million, a Muslim? He was an atheist!

The list goes on; what would the atheist's response be now?

All these murderers acted on the natural law in the statement: "Conquer the weak and ascend over their corpses!"

(13) In the ninth chapter, the discussion was about the problem of evil, explaining the corruption of their perception.

Compare that with the teachings of Islam: {So as for the orphan, do not oppress *[him]*. And as for the petitioner, do not repel *[him]*} *[Al-Duha: 9 - 10]*.

This statement is the logical conclusion of atheism, which was understood and acted upon by Lenin, Mao, Stalin, and their ilk.

In contrast, do atheists know that the Prophet of Islam ﷺ whom they oppose and whose religion they oppose - and his companions, throughout all the years of fighting with their enemies, which is close to ten years, only killed six hundred and twenty-five people?

Someone might say: The weaponry, in terms of its lethality, differed between those times; there were no bombs, missiles, or warplanes then!

It is said: If the Prophet ﷺ and his companions had a bloodthirst like those atheists, the number of deaths would have been much higher by many multiples.

Did the Tatars - akin to those atheists - when they invaded Muslim lands in the year 656 AH, have tanks, cluster bombs, and warplanes?! It is said that they killed two million Muslims in Baghdad alone! *[Al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya by Ibn Kathir (17/361)]*.

Our Prophet ﷺ was a prophet of mercy {And We have not sent you, *[O Muhammad]*, except as a mercy to the worlds} *[Al-Anbiya: 107]*, his religion is a religion of mercy, and his companions were the most merciful of people after him; thus, they were not bloodthirsty.

This is the truth, nothing else!

Here he is ﷺ conquering Mecca, and the necks of those who opposed him, harmed him, expelled him from his land, and killed his companions, were at his mercy; if he had wished to kill thousands, nothing would have prevented him; yet, do you know

how many people were killed among the polytheists that day? Only twenty-four people! And these were those who initiated the fight against the companions *[Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra by Ibn Saad (7/395)]*.

So, what can the atheist say now?!

Among the unseriousness of atheists in discussing matters is their conflation of religions; they treat all religions the same and judge them by one standard, making no distinction between those who worship the great God, the Lord of mankind, and those who worship cows, stones, and trees! ... It's injustice and what an injustice!

And here are brief examples of their contradictions, as illustrations rather than an exhaustive list:

- The atheist denies the existence of the Creator, even though they believe in the creative power of multiple universes; that the universe created itself; that randomness created, and nature created; so why object specifically to the creation by "God"?
- Atheists claim that the only way to knowledge is through experience, and that anything contrary to experience is mere sophistry and empty talk. Thus, they deny religion, the supernatural, and miracles, yet they believe in the theory of evolution, although it is entirely unseen in detail and in entirety. No one has seen the first cell, observed random mutations, witnessed natural selection, or the intermediate forms, let alone experimented with any of this!
- Atheists claim to believe only in the existing material, yet they believe that nothingness brought about something! (For them, the first cell came from nothing).
- Atheists smugly say: Since we cannot see Allah, He does not exist! This is a defiance of reason and perception; for if we applied his

rule in the scientific field he boasts about, all the foundations of experimental science would collapse, even though the atheist claims to rely on it; no scientist has seen gravity, electrons, ether, or atomic nature... in a long series of scientific facts.

Thus, our inability to see Allah Almighty in this world and our inability to comprehend His essence does not mean He does not exist, and it suffices for minds to infer His existence from the effects of His creation, thus finding tranquility and contentment.

- When atheists limit perceptions to only what is tangible, they reject the truthful reports that came from the way of those whose truthfulness has been definitively proven. This is a defiance of what all rational people know that sciences are attained through sensation, reason, and also truthful reports.

  Interestingly, they contradict themselves in this regard; because they deny reports and accept them simultaneously! When one of them uses a theory as evidence, they are asked: Have you applied it yourself? They would say: No, but so-and-so did, and so-and-so stated it! This contradicts their alleged methodology; where they reached what they believe through believing in reports, not through sensation; so why do atheists fault the faithful for accepting religious reports about the unseen? For if atheists' reports talk about tangibles, the messengers' reports about the unseen also talk about tangibles; but those are perceived after death.

  If these are reports and those are reports; then the messengers' reports are more deserving of acceptance; for definitive proofs establish their truthfulness.

  Therefore, the atheistic methodology is contradictory; it denies something and believes its counterpart, for example, it denies that Allah created Adam from clay and then humanity propagated after him; because it is unseen and not tangible to them, and

on the contrary, they believe in evolution or multiple universes, although these too are unseen for them! But it is acceptable to them because its source is atheistic, and that is rejected because its source is Qur'anic revelation! The methodology is contradictory, governed only by whims.

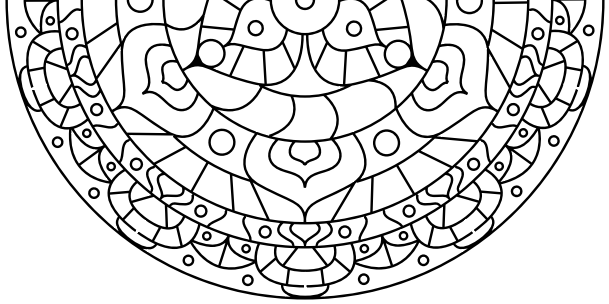
- An atheist mocks a Muslim who believes in the Sun prostrating under the Throne as established in the Sunnah; which is more worthy of mockery: An atheist who says: A sun with a very large body and extreme heat, swimming in space in a disciplined orbit and boundaries it does not exceed by an inch, and the sun and its movement and regularity: all this happened by chance without the creation of a Creator! Or the belief that the sun, created by the Almighty and Powerful Creator and directed where He willed, prostrates under the Throne in a certain place, without us understanding its reality?! No doubt, the second statement is more acceptable to every rational mind.
- The atheist claims to be rational and appeals to reason, then believes that non-sentient matter accidentally brought about reason; how is this rational?

  Then: How can you trust the results of a mind that came into existence by chance!
- Finally, atheists assume that the natural state is the non-existence of the Creator, and that the one who claims His existence is the one who needs to provide evidence.

  The truth is the opposite; the natural state is what the majority of people believe, what they find essential in their souls, and anyone deviating from this is the one who needs to provide evidence.

  So glorified is my great Lord; is there doubt in Allah! Everything is evidence of Him; even the tongue of the atheist, who speaks in denial of his Lord, is a great proof of Him, glorified be He!

But: {It is not the eyes that are blinded, but the hearts within the chests are blinded} *[Al-Hajj: 46]*.



# Chapter Twenty-Nine: Whispers in Faith

Certainty: It is the complete knowledge that has no trace of doubt, compelling action.

True certainty: It is the belief in the unseen, in Allah's promise and threat, in such a way that the heart harbors no doubt or suspicion.

Certainty brings tranquility, security, and peace to the heart; it is the spirit and life of faith; indeed, it is faith itself. Its people are specially graced with guidance and success among all beings. Allah Almighty says: {And those who believe in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you, and of the Hereafter they are certain. Those are upon *[right]* guidance from their Lord, and it is those who are the successful} *[Al-Baqarah: 4 - 5]*.

Conversely, the people of Hell lack certainty. Allah Almighty says about them: {And when it is said, "Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth and the Hour *[is coming]* - no doubt about it," you say, "We do not know what the Hour is. We assume only assumption, and we are not convinced"} *[Al-Jathiyah: 32]*.

People of certainty: The truth is as clear to them as the sun {Indeed, We have made clear the signs to a people who are certain} *[Al-Baqarah: 118]*.

They do not doubt Allah's divine or destined decree {And who is better in judgment than Allah for a people who are certain} *[Al-Ma'idah: 50]*.

Certainty is the greatest blessing a Muslim can achieve.

Firm certainty in Allah, His religion, His prophet, and His book - which is not contradicted by doubts nor weakened by unworthy thoughts - is a blessing unmatched; blessed are the people of certainty!

Certainty is all happiness, it is the soul and joy; for when it settles in the heart: it fills with light and radiance, and all doubt and discontent, worry and sorrow are banished.

The heart enveloped in certainty and lit by its lights is in overwhelming happiness, making all the nuisances and calamities of the world trivial; whatever befalls it, it exclaims: No, indeed with me is my Lord, He will guide me!

When a servant fully realizes the truths of certainty, trials become blessings to him, and the world in his eyes is a fleeting shadow that does not dominate him; and what rational person would busy themselves with crumbs of food from a grand banquet filled with delights!

In conclusion: Whoever is graced with the comfort of certainty is in a blessing beyond comparison to the treasures of the earth, and even if he were to prostrate in gratitude to Allah for the duration of his life, he would not fulfill the right of this blessing.

This is truly understood by those who see that poor, bewildered soul, whose spirit is torn with regrets, assaulted by doubts and dangerous thoughts, captive in their grip, shackled by their chains, having endured constant distress and psychological torment known only to Allah, striving for liberation but unable to reach it, searching for a piece of certainty to calm his soul but finding none!

So thank Allah, O you have certainty, you who are content with Allah as Lord, with Islam as religion, and with Muhammad ﷺ as prophet, remain steadfast in your state, beware of the instigations of your evil-commanding soul, beware of the whispers of the devils of humans and jinn, beware of the schemes of Allah's enemies who are most eager to weaken your certainty; for the greater the sought after, the more obstacles and barriers there are against it, such is the law of Allah in His creation, {So be patient. Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth. And let not those who are uncertain deter you} *[Al-Rum: 60]*.

## Why Discuss Whispers in Faith?

After the previous discussion about atheism and its complexities, it is appropriate for us to consider the topic of whispers in faith. There are people whose issues intersect with the topic of atheism; they think—or it is thought—that they have atheistic doubts. In reality, their problem is not a doubt requiring an answer, but rather a satanic whisper needing treatment, and discussing with arguments and evidence is neither suitable nor effective for them. This is a reality known to everyone who has sat with people and listened to their problems; a sizable portion of them suffer from obsessive-compulsive whispers or less severe intrusive thoughts.

Distinguishing between someone who has a doubt or issue stemming from a scientific or philosophical suspicion and someone

who has a whisper is particularly important; each requires a different approach, and using the wrong approach may not only fail but could produce the opposite effect.

Regardless, it's no secret to say that whispers are a widespread affliction in our times. They may relate to the foundation of faith or to religious matters like purification, prayer, divorce, and others, or they may be related to family, social, or other matters. Specialists need to seriously consider this.

## What Are Whispers and Where Do They Come From?

Whispers: It is the self and Satan talking about what is neither beneficial nor good.

These are ideas, mental images, or tendencies that repeatedly intrude on the mind, accompanied by discomfort and distress, making the person wish they could get rid of these thoughts.

Undoubtedly, Satan is the instigator of whispers; those who are obsessed have obeyed him, answered his call, and followed his command.

It is well known that Divine revelation is the soul's spirit, and the heart finds no peace, stability, or tranquility except when it flows within it, for it is the substance of true life and the sign of happiness and tranquility. Allah Almighty says: {And thus We have revealed to you a spirit of Our command. You did not know what the Book or faith was, but We made it a light by which We guide whom We will of Our servants. And indeed, you guide to a straight path} *[Al-Shura: 52]*.

When the heart strays from Allah and from correct knowledge of Him and His law, dominate it with various schemes.

And the greatest tool Satan uses to dominate the hearts of Adam's children is the weapon of whispers; for he mixes things up so that the truth is hardly clear except to those whom Allah protects from him. Whispers are the strategy of the withdrawing whisperer, who whispers into the chests of people, running through the son of Adam like blood through veins, as the Prophet ﷺ said in the authentic collections: "Indeed, Satan runs through the human being like blood" *[Bukhari 2038, Muslim 2174]*.

When Satan collaborates with the soul that commands to evil, the affliction is magnified, {Indeed, the soul is a persistent enjoiner of evil, except those upon which my Lord has mercy} *[Yusuf: 53]*.

If whispers are related to belief in Allah Almighty—His existence, Lordship, attributes—or His book or His prophet ﷺ the affliction of whispers is even greater.

## Importance of Addressing Whispers in Faith

Understanding the domination of Satan, his instigations, and his whispers, and recognizing the reality of these, generates an awareness that helps one understand their nature and the correct stance to take against them.

Reflecting on the verses of the Quran, one finds careful warnings about the schemes of Satan and his temptations; because the evil and corruption of the soul arise from his whispers, which are his vehicle and the place of his evil and the site of his obedience.

Satan is ever on the watch for the believing servant, as confirmed by Allah Almighty's words about him: {Then I will come to them from before them and from behind them and on their right and on their left} *[Al-A'raf: 17]*. And His words: {Indeed, Satan to man is a clear enemy} *[Yusuf: 5]*.

Yet, Allah has informed us that Satan has no authority over the believers as He said: {Indeed, he has no authority over those who have believed and rely on their Lord} *[Al-Nahl: 99]*. His authority is denied to those characterized by two traits: faith and reliance on Him.

The denied authority here is that of argument and proof, and Iblis has no argument or proof; rather, his authority is through temptation and whispering. He exercises this over those who ally with him, {His authority is only over those who take him as an ally and those who through him associate others with Allah} *[Al-Nahl: 100]*; they ally with him by following desires, responding to his adornment, and neglecting the remembrance of Allah, as well as those who associate with him, who are in greater misguidance than their predecessors.

Thus, the reality of Satan's authority is but an authority of enticement, not of proof. And it is a weak authority: {Indeed, the plot of Satan has ever been weak} *[Al-Nahl: 76]*.

Satan has several ways in, but the most harmful is whispering, which is his way to a group of Muslims whom he could not tempt by other means, so he deceived them with a trick that appears merciful outwardly but is torment inwardly.

Realizing that these whispers are from Satan's plots is the beginning of the road in repelling this plot and pushing it away. For when a person does not realize that there is a great plot by Satan, they will be heedless of their enemy and he will dominate them without their noticing, continuing until he overthrows them, and they become prisoners to him.

## Do Whispers Have a Negative Impact on Muslim's Creed?

As long as a whisper remains a whisper, it has no impact on a Muslim's creed; Allah has excused this nation for the thoughts it has as long as it does not speak or act upon them. So those afflicted should be reassured; in Ahmad's Musnad (2097) with a sound chain from Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both, a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "O Messenger of Allah, I have thoughts of something that I would rather plunge from the sky than speak of." The Prophet ﷺ said: "Allah is greater, Allah is greater, Allah is greater. Praise be to Allah who has reduced his plot to mere whispering." This hadith indicates that a person is not taken to account for their whispers, and it is authentically reported that detesting them is clear proof of faith *[Sahih Muslim 132]*.

However, the danger lies in indulging them; they might gradually escalate from minor to major, potentially leading to doubt and hypocrisy-like suspicion after the whispering, like the hypocrites about whom Allah said: {and their hearts doubted, so they were in their doubt uncertain} *[Al-Tawbah: 45]*, thus reaching the point of total apostasy from religion.

## Obsessive-Compulsive Whispering

The characteristic of obsessive-compulsive whispering is the presence of certain intrusive thoughts in the patient's mind despite their wishes, falling into the trap of a set of ideas related to a specific subject such that they cannot ignore them, with all the worry and distress they bring, despite being aware that these ideas are trivial or incorrect; yet they cannot stop them, feeling instead that they are increasingly pervasive, thereby causing deep suffering for the afflicted.

Obsessive-compulsive whispering has several forms, of concern to us is the obsession of thoughts, the dominance of a specific idea over the patient's mind, often an unacceptable idea.

Including rumination obsessions, where the patient is dominated by repeated questions they cannot answer, like the domination of the question: "Allah created us; then who created Allah?" or poor ideas related to Allah's attributes, or fears of apostasy, or similar matters.

It is important to note that whispers related to the foundation of faith are the most dangerous type.

**Treatment for Those Afflicted with Whispers Affecting Their Faith**

Discussing this topic is extensive, and I will just provide some pointers. There are ten pieces of advice for those afflicted with whispers, and it's important for them and those around them, like family and friends, to know these to support and encourage the afflicted, as their responsibility towards them is significant:

### *1- Seeking refuge with Allah from Satan the accursed*

This refuge reaches its effect when it is based on a firm belief in its meaning, where both the tongue and heart are involved. For seeking refuge means to flee towards and seek closeness to something, and whoever seeks refuge in Allah clings to and seeks refuge in Him; what harm could reach him while he firmly believes that he is protected by the Lord of everything? And Allah Almighty says, {And if an evil suggestion comes to you from Satan, then seek refuge in Allah. Indeed, He is Hearing, Knowing} *[Al-A'raf: 200]*.

Indeed, Allah is Hearing; He hears your invocation and responds, knowing; He knows what you seek protection from and averts it.

By Allah, those who truly seek refuge in Allah with sincerity and presence of heart, Allah will indeed protect them, and will suffice them against the evil of their Satan, and the false whispers will diminish, for Allah has immense power, while Iblis has only weak plotting.

### *2- Religious knowledge*

For knowledge dispels doubts for the believer. Knowing that Satan's authority is only that of instigation and temptation, not of argument and proof, and that he may approach the servant from a perspective that what he insinuates is a valid argument, making the confused think it's true when in fact it is but a plot and whisper: it becomes clear that seeking sincere religious knowledge is one of the ways to repel and refute whispers.

### *3- Persisting in reciting the Quran thoughtfully, and continuously uttering remembrances (adhkar), in the morning, evening, at bedtime, and at all times*

For remembrance is a strong fortress against Satan the accursed. In the lengthy hadith of Al-Harith Al-Ash'ari, may Allah be pleased with him, reported by At-Tirmidhi (2863) with a sound chain, where the Prophet ﷺ, narrating from Yahya bin Zakariya, peace be upon them, said, "And I command you to remember Allah, for the likeness of that is like a man whose enemies were hastening to him, and when he reached a fortified fortress, he protected himself from them. Similarly, a servant cannot protect himself from Satan except by remembering Allah."

This is an important rule; reflect deeply upon it: "Similarly, a servant cannot protect himself from Satan except by remembering Allah."

Be diligent about remembrances with presence of heart, particularly saying, "La ilaha illallah wahdahu la sharika lahu, lahul-mulku wa lahul-hamdu wa huwa 'ala kulli shay'in qadir" one hundred times a day to be a fortress for you against Satan for that day, as established in Sahihain *[Bukhari 3293, Muslim 2691]* from him ﷺ.

### *4- Cutting off prolongation*

A believer should not prolong engagement with the traps of Satan and his suggestions.

The prompt and effective treatment is to ignore and cut off prolongation; as mentioned in Sahihain *[Bukhari 3276, Muslim 134]*, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Satan comes to one of you and says, 'Who created this and that?' until he says to him, 'Who created your Lord?' When it reaches that point, let him seek refuge in Allah and stop."

"To stop" — thus, the treatment is to not respond to these whispers to protect oneself from Allah's enemy. When Satan brings you poor thoughts, do not pay attention to them, do not continue thinking about them, distract your mind, occupy yourself, change your environment, call a friend, talk to them, or engage in a sport.

Disobey Satan once, twice, three times, and he will despair of you; indeed, the plot of Satan was weak.

I reiterate what I said: The most beneficial thing for those afflicted with whispers, after seeking refuge in Allah, is to cease and cut off prolongation; especially if the whispers about Allah; for Allah has set a limit to the intellects beyond which they cannot pass, and it is impossible for them to exceed it. Attempting the impossible is false and foolish. When intellects reach Him, they stop and cease, for He is the First, with nothing before Him, and

the Last, with nothing after Him. His primacy has no beginning, so stop and do not prolong.

And I point out—before concluding this advice—with two alerts:

**The first**: Thoughts are of two kinds: those from the category of whispers, not brought about by a real doubt; these are repelled by ignoring them, as previously discussed.

**The second**: Ending and cutting off prolongation means one should stop listening to doubts from the devils of mankind, and refrain from reading their words and listening to them; for if the devil among the jinn whispers, so does the devil among mankind, and perhaps his whisper is stronger, {Who whispers in the breasts of mankind, from among the jinn and mankind} *[Al-Nas: 5 - 6]*, and Allah said, {And thus We have made for every prophet an enemy - devils of mankind and jinn, inspiring to one another decorative speech in delusion} *[Al-An'am: 112]*.

### *5- Keeping the company of the righteous*

For in their company, one finds support, guidance, sincere advice, enlightenment, and firmness in faith by Allah's grace.

Hold fast to them; for they are the best provision in life and the most beneficial tool in combating whispers.

### *6- Sincere and persistent supplication*

For Allah alone has the power to avert trials. One cannot escape Shaytan except by seeking refuge with Allah Almighty, as guided by the complete surah: {Say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind, the Sovereign of mankind, the God of mankind, from the evil of the whisperer, who withdraws, who whispers in the breasts of mankind, from among the jinn and mankind"} *[Al-Nas: 1 - 6]*. So, pray sincerely and persistently without despair.

### *7- Striving and persevering*

The afflicted must arm themselves with this; the cure may not be easy and might require time, patience, and struggle. Be strong and resilient, seeking help from Allah, and relief is near.

The treatment may be painful at first, but with time the disturbing thoughts will weaken and gradually become insignificant by Allah's success.

### *8- Endeavoring to do things that increase faith and avoiding sins*

Strong, sincere, and certain faith repels all that contradicts it, as truth dispels falsehood, and doubts do not confront certainty.

One must be earnest and exert effort in advancing through the stages of faith if one is keen on the well-being and protection of one's soul.

### *9- Medication prescribed by doctors*

Combining treatment with remembrance and legitimate Ruqyah along with medical drugs is beneficial by Allah's success, and there is no contradiction between them.

Thus, visiting a trustworthy psychiatrist and adhering to the prescribed treatment plan may be beneficial by Allah's will.

### *10- Adhering to the great prophetic pieces of advice related to this matter*

For those whom whispers have reached to the point of doubting their Lord, they must cling to these. Summarized from the authentic hadiths are five things:

**First**: The believer should say: "I believe in Allah and His messengers."

**Second**: Say: "Allah is One, Allah is the Sustainer, He neither begets nor is born, nor is there to Him any equivalent."

**Third**: To spit (lightly) to the left after saying this, three times.

**Fourth**: To seek refuge in Allah from Satan.

**Fifth**: To cease these whispers.

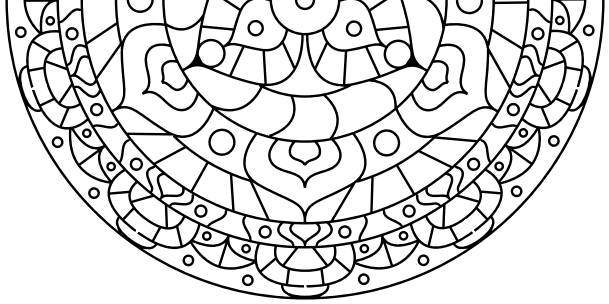
A sixth advice recommended by Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both; he said: {He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden, and He is knowledgeable of all things} *[Al-Hadid: 3]*. In Sunan Abi Dawud (5110) with a good chain, a man asked him about something he felt in his chest. Ibn Abbas asked: "Is it doubt?" He laughed and said, "No one is safe from that." Then he told him, "When you feel something, say: {He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden, and He is knowledgeable of all things} *[Al-Hadid: 3]*." Allah knows best.

## For additional benefit

I recommend reading two sections by Ibn Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him:

1- The chapter about certainty in Madarij al-Salikin (3/170) from the Dar Alam al-Fawa'id edition.

2- His discussion on whispers, particularly concerning acts of worship, in his book Ighathat al-Lahfan (1/219) and subsequent sections from the Dar Alam al-Fawa'id edition.



# Chapter Thirty: The Importance of Doctrinal Fortification

The evident truth that no rational person denies today is the immense horrors and tempestuous trials surrounding Muslim youth across the Islamic world. It is crucial for the wise to be vigilant.

Youth, both males and females, as well as adults and children, are targets of the arrows of advocates of evil and corruption, including atheists, Christian missionaries, proponents of severe heresies, and advocates of dissolute and extreme ideologies.

Faced with this torrent of concentrated ideological invasion, we must confront ourselves with the reality: assuming that any Muslim youth are immune to falling into the filthy mire of misguidance is a deception of the self and a false illusion; one must not think that they are sufficiently fortified against the flood of destructive ideologies, or that they are safe from their influence in their thoughts and morals, or that it is impossible for them to be diverted towards religious extremism or to break away from religion entirely.

Thus, we are amid a dangerous, sweeping epidemic; what preventive measures and means of safety do we have at our disposal?

The answer: There is no escape, after the success granted by Allah, except through fortification, solid foundational teachings, and correct doctrinal grounding. This has become an utmost necessity today, where complacency is unacceptable. And I would like to point out that the greater the misguidance and its proliferation, the greater should be the fear of it, and the stronger should be the fortification against it. The epidemic threatening faith is more deadly and dangerous than the epidemic threatening bodies; hence, the preventive measures against it should be stricter.

Consider the words of the Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him): {And keep me and my sons away from worshiping idols} *[Ibrahim: 35]*. Ibrahim, the leader of the monotheists and father of the prophets ﷺ, feared for himself regarding shirk! What then should others say? And the esteemed Successor, Ibrahim al-Taymi ﷺ rightly said, "Who can feel safe from affliction after the Friend of Allah, Ibrahim?"

Thus, fearing disbelief, polytheism, and misguidance are among the high stations for the people of faith. The greater a person's faith, the greater their fear of falling into its opposite.

Consider the rationale in the verse: {Lord, indeed they have led many people astray} *[Ibrahim: 36]*. One reason to fear misguidance is the multitude of those who fall into its trap, for the more widespread a disease is, the more dangerous it is due to the higher likelihood of infection.

If falling into misguidance was feared in the past, it should be feared even more today because the misconceptions that beautify and draw souls to apostasy and distance them from faith have become closer than before. The torrent of misconceptions is now

thrown at people through modern communication and social media platforms, a fact not hidden from the observant. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "The Hour will not begin until tribes of my Ummah join the polytheists and until they worship idols." Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (2219), and he ﷺ said: "Hasten to perform good deeds before trials come like the dark part of the night. A man will wake up as a believer and by evening he will be a disbeliever, or he will be a believer in the evening and wake up a disbeliever, selling his faith for worldly gain," reported by Muslim (118).

It should be known that true fear of disbelief necessitates knowledge of it and its entrances, for the unknown is not feared, and the more one knows about evil, the more they fear it.

Anyone wishing to reach the level of the righteous in fearing misguidance must understand its principles, details, subtleties, means, its sinfulness, and its punishment. This ignites a genuine fear of it in the heart.

Therefore, the companions of the Prophet ﷺ were the most complete in this station because they knew the truth best, understood falsehood well, adhered most strictly to the truth, and stayed farthest from falsehood.

Monotheism cannot stand firm except on two things: knowing the truth and adhering to it and knowing its opposite and avoiding it. Whoever falls short in one of them will experience a corresponding defect. How beautifully it is reported from Umar ﷺ who said: "The ties of Islam will be undone one by one for those who grew up in Islam but did not know Jahiliyyah (ignorance before Islam)," because the fortunate and blessed are those who know the truth in detail, adhere to it, and also those who know falsehood in detail and avoid it.

As for those who wander through life unable to distinguish between good and evil, faith and disbelief, light and darkness, their downfall is swift!

### The Impact of Learning Correct Doctrine in Preventing Misguidance

The correct doctrine— the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, the creed of the righteous predecessors—is, by the grace of Allah, a strong fortress against falling into the pit of misguidance, be it disbelief, heresy, extremism, or decadence. In this doctrine, there is convincing truth, definitive answers to doubts, a harmony of reason and tradition, clarity and simplicity, and a balance between excess and negligence. It involves holding fast to the rope of Allah and adhering to the evidence of the Quran and the Sunnah comprehensively.

Anyone who firmly believes in it has grasped a reliable means of salvation.

## The Benefits a Muslim Gains from Being Firm in Doctrine

A Muslim who is firm in the correct doctrine and learns it will reap every benefit. Although detailing all these benefits would require extensive space, I will focus on three:

**Firstly**: To know Allah. And who is Allah? He is the Almighty who should be greater, more beloved, more feared, and more hoped for in the heart than anything else. He is unique in His lordship, alone in His divinity. His oneness is testified by all creation, and before His greatness, all beings are humbled and needy. He who is established on His throne, manages the affairs of His servants; forgives sins, relieves distress, mends the broken, and enriches the poor.

He is the First with nothing before Him, the Last with nothing after Him, the Highest above all, and the Nearest close to everyone.

Knowing Him is knowing everything, and ignorance of Him is ignorance of everything.

Knowing Him, loving Him, and worshiping Him alone leads to complete happiness and eternal bliss, understanding the purpose of your existence, giving your life value. Allah did not create you for anything but to know Him, then to act according to this knowledge by loving and worshiping Him alone.

This is the most significant issue in life, and the firmer you are in the doctrine, the more upright you become.

**Secondly**: If you are fortunate and deeply rooted in doctrine, you win a great prize: a sound heart. Learning the correct doctrine leads to this.

A sound heart is one that is free from anything that distances it from Allah; it submits, surrenders, and aligns with Allah in love, fear, repentance, reliance, supplication, sincerity, reverence, and glorification. It desires none but Him, fears none but Him, turns to none but Him, relies on none but Him. There is nothing in the heart for others, no desire for what is forbidden, no aversion to what He has commanded. It lives by the verse {And to your Lord is the final destination} *[Al-Najm: 42]*.

This is the heart that will survive on the Day of Judgment, when neither wealth nor children will benefit, except for those who come to Allah with a sound heart.

**Thirdly**, one of the fruits of foundational doctrinal education is achieving a level of insight, and blessed is the one who attains it; for no one is granted anything better than insight into their religion, even if their deeds may fall short. The difference in virtue

among people is according to their varying degrees of insight. As some of the predecessors mentioned, "They used to act based on clear insights!"

A person of insight sees things clearly and distinctly, understands their reality and surroundings, and knows what harms and benefits them. The truth is clear to them, shining with its own light, while falsehood remains as dark as a moonless night.

A person of insight is certain and steadfast, navigating this life guided by clarity from their Lord, worshiping Him in the light of the verse {So is one whose breast Allah has expanded to *[accept]* Islam and he is upon a light from his Lord *[like one whose heart rejects it]*?} *[Al-Zumar: 22]*.

Therefore, attaining a degree of religious insight stems from a dedication to understanding the doctrine through study, learning, and adherence. How different is this from someone whose faith is mere familiarity and tradition, who grew up among Muslims and became one of them by circumstance, but whose heart has not been touched by the joy of faith. Such a person is at significant risk of doubts and challenges. If faced with skepticism, they might waver; if presented with an attractive alternative to their faith, they might abandon it! Those whose faith is so superficial are in grave danger.

A person of true insight, however, remains firm through the support of Allah when the storms of doubts and desires strike; their footing in the true religion is solid, and faith permeates their flesh and blood. They have recognized with their heart and mind the beauty, majesty, and perfection of this religion. If given the choice between being thrown into fire or selecting another religion, they would choose the fire over changing their faith.

## Topics to Focus on for Tasting the Flavor of Faith

There is a goal we must strive for, both ourselves and those around us, which is to taste the flavor of faith; this is the divine safeguard against deviation. If a Muslim tastes the flavor of faith and feels its sweetness, they will not exchange it for anything, even if it were all the treasures of the earth.

But how can one achieve this? Our Prophet ﷺ clarified this in a hadith documented in Sahih Muslim (34): "He has tasted the flavor of faith, he who is content with Allah as his Lord, Islam as his religion, and Muhammad as his Messenger."

The aim of the doctrine of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah is to reach this goal.

I advise focusing on the following topics, which are ten in total, some of which have been discussed in previous chapters:

1- **Belief in Allah Almighty**: This is the both the beginning and the end, and includes understanding the proofs of His existence, Lordship, and Divinity, and venerating Him through knowledge of His Names and Attributes. Deep understanding in this area is crucial.

2- **The beauties of Islam:** Those who are certain of the beauty, goodness, and nobility of Islam will not replace it with anything else.

Had they truly known Islam, they would not have strayed,

to other paths, but alas, they were unversed and swayed!

The commitment must be firm that Islam is the faith that comforts the soul, the servitude that elevates the spirit, and the law that purifies the body. Consider that a Muslim's feet are washed more often in a day than the face of others is washed! And in

what other religion is cleaning the mouth and using a toothpick considered an act of worship?

Awareness is needed that the Sharia of Islam encompasses sublime morals and wonderful manners; it even considers the feelings of animals! What other law prohibits sharpening a knife in front of a sheep?

It is crucial to recognize that Islam is the only religion where reason and revelation coincide, seamlessly integrating all aspects of life with remarkable comprehensiveness and precision; yet it remains an easy and straightforward religion in its adoption, belief, and practice.

In summary, the more you know about what you love, the more you will love it and cherish it.

By Allah, if my soul knew of my beloved's worth,

it would come crawling on its head, besides its feet on earth!

3- **Proofs of Prophethood** should be thoroughly studied along with the noble character and biography of the Prophet ﷺ.

4- **Achieving true monotheism and deepening faith in the unseen.**

5- **Understanding loyalty and disavowal in light of Sharia evidence**, and the rules and boundaries of declaring disbelief, away from the laxity of the licentious and the extremism of the zealots.

6- **Having the correct belief in destiny, the wisdom and reasoning behind Allah's actions**, as this is one of the broadest gates through which human devils introduce confusion to the youth.

7- **Having the correct approach to dealing with doubts**: either avoiding them or making efforts to dispel them.

8- **Reverence for the evidence of the Quran and Sunnah**, submitting to it and prioritizing it more than anything else, filling the heart with this submission.

9- **Eliminating the misconception of a conflict between reason and scripture**, while understanding the rightful place and function of reason.

10- **Knowing the sources of Knowledge among Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah**, and the proper methods of reasoning.

## Recommended References

There are many books on the doctrine of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, followers of the righteous predecessors, praised be Allah. I will recommend a few that are known for their clarity and ease.

- For something easy and clear, I recommend listening to the lessons of Shaikh Muhammad bin Salih al-Uthaymin on doctrine. The Shaikh, may Allah have mercy on him, has left us a rich scholarly legacy. His presentations are known for their clarity and precision, especially his explanations of Al-Usul al-Thalathah, Aqidat Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, Al-Qawl al-Mufeed, and the explanation of Al-Wasitiyyah.
- I also recommend the doctrinal letters of Shaikh Abdul Rahman al-Sa'di, especially his refutations of atheism and explanations of the beauties of Islam, previously mentioned in Chapter 18.
- If you want a comprehensive book on correct doctrine that is easy and filled with evidence, consider "Ma'arij al-Qabool" by Shaikh Hafiz al-Hakami, may Allah have mercy on him. For a brief guide, take "A'lam al-Sunnah al-Manshoorah" by him, presented in a question-and-answer format.
- For a comprehensive encyclopedia on doctrine, acquire the

"Mawsu'at al-Aqidah" published by the "Saudi Scientific Society for the Sciences of Creed" in six volumes.

- If you wish to delve deeper into this knowledge, I recommend immersing yourself in the books of the great imams, Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn al-Qayyim; you will find pure and valuable knowledge.
- For an extensive online resource containing research, books, clips, and fatwas on creed, visit the website of the "Saudi Scientific Society for the Sciences of Creed".

## How Do We Doctrinally Fortify Our Children?

This question is the most important one that should be posed to every parent, teacher, and official!

One of today's key tasks is to strive to build a generation fortified doctrinally; one that has received the necessary "vaccinations" against the epidemic of doubts and suspicions; so that they may stand firm and healthy in their religion, immune from the arrows of the misguided.

We live in challenging times! And if the danger is great for adults, how much greater is it for children!

Recognizing responsibility and trust is the beginning and the foundation, and let's remember that a question awaits us in the hereafter: "Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock" *[Bukhari 893, Muslim 1829]*. And the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "There is no servant whom Allah has given responsibility for a flock, who does not take care of them with sincere advice, except that he will not find the fragrance of Paradise" *[Bukhari 7150, Muslim 142]*.

This topic is so extensive that I am unable to cover even some of it in these pages, but here are seven brief pieces of advice:

**Firstly**: Asking Allah for their guidance and steadfastness.

This should not be taken lightly; this is crucial, central, and essential. You should dedicate a significant part of your time to pray for your children and the children of Muslims and take this matter seriously; the issue is critical.

If you have been lax in praying for them in the past, do not be in the future, and if you have been diligent, increase your efforts.

**Secondly**: We must begin with ourselves; when we take care of fortifying and doctrinally grounding ourselves, this will undoubtedly reflect on those around us, and one cannot give what one does not have.

**Thirdly**: Keep in mind that among the foundational principles of education you should adhere to are:

- Instilling the love of Allah, His Oneness, and His observation in their hearts.
- Absolute obedience to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.
- Reverence for the revelation, respecting the Quran and Hadith.
- Our weakness in comparison to Allah's power and richness.

These fundamentals should be emphasized and reaffirmed at all times.

**Fourthly**: Focus on the purpose of life.

The absence of purpose in some of the rising generation is unfortunate; this should not be overlooked.

Why do I exist? Why did Allah create me? What is my major function in life?

Plant the answers to these existential questions deep in your child's heart whenever possible; teach them that worshipping Allah is more important than anything else and comes before everything else, and that the "future" we should strive for is the Hereafter, with the worldly future merely a means to achieve the afterlife future; instill in them, for example, the need to excel in their studies and achieve the highest degrees because a strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah, and in order to benefit themselves, their family, their community, and Muslims; thus increasing their reward... and so on.

**Fifthly**: Instill in your child "the religion of conviction."

If you command him to pray, tell him: Pray because the one who created you - the Exalted - has commanded it, be honest because Allah loves honesty, do not lie because Allah despises lying, do the right thing because Allah sees you, eat with your right hand because this is the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ...

Always clarify to him the fruits of obeying Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

Instill in him the religion of conviction, not the religion of habit!

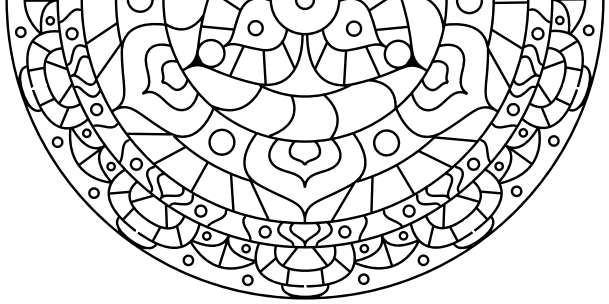
**Sixthly**: Prepare a suitable environment - or at least a non-harmful one! - on the network - or social media - so that your child does not exceed its boundaries.

I need not remind you that for most families, the network has become an imposed reality, indeed, a part of life; and the network's webs are attractive to the young. Therefore, we must interact with this positively and correctly.

There are controls available, thankfully, through certain programs to navigate our children's online journey. There are excellent and sound projects on websites and templates that are attractive to children which can be a suitable alternative to the vast amount of triviality and vulgarity.

**Seventhly**: There are good and beneficial methods, such as teaching doctrine through some enjoyable means, or through coloring books titled "The Doctrine of the Muslim Child" and the like. These present the basics of doctrine in an easy style, and children enjoy coloring with them. These and similar methods are useful and should be utilized, complementing what educational curricula and what good parents and educators instill.

In conclusion: Keep the doctrinal development of your son and daughter in clear focus, be sincere and seek Allah's guidance for success in this, and Allah will open closed doors for you and grant you your desires {And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good} *[Al-'Ankabut: 69]*.



# Chapter Thirty-One: Questions on Worship

"Worship" is a vast and significant topic, deserving of extensive discussion and exploration, as what could be more crucial than the purpose for which we were created?

Speaking concisely about a topic as expansive as worship is challenging; how can one possibly summarize it in just a few lines? However, perhaps distilling it into a few comprehensive principles can help us achieve that for which we aim.

The core aspects of the subject of worship can be summarized into four main principles:

**First**: Worship encompasses the perfection of loving Allah, fearing Him, and hoping in Him, combined with submission and compliance to His command. This is the ultimate purpose of creation; Allah Almighty created beings to worship Him exclusively, without any partners, as He states: {And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me} *[Al-Dhariyat: 56]*.

**Second**: Worship has two constraints, two pillars, two conditions, and two categories.

- Worship has two constraints: Worship is a term that encompasses everything Allah loves and is pleased with, from both hidden and visible words and deeds. Thus, worship is not considered true worship unless these two constraints are met:

1. It must be something Allah loves.

2. It must be something He has legislated for His servants.

- Worship has two pillars: The first pillar is the ultimate love. The second pillar is the utmost humility.

And there is no worship without the combination of these two.

***Worship of the Merciful is the peak of His love,***

***combined with the worshiper's utmost humility, these are the two poles.***

***Upon them spins the sphere of worship,***

***revolving only when these two pillars stand firm.***

- Worship has two conditions: 1/ Sincerity to Allah, the Exalted. 2/ Following His Messenger ﷺ.

Worship is not accepted unless these two conditions are met.

- Worship is of two types: 1/ Apparent worship. 2/ Inner worship.

As for apparent worship, it includes the righteous deeds performed physically, such as prayer, zakat, pilgrimage, the call to prayer, and similar acts.

Inner worship consists of the righteous deeds conducted in the heart, such as love for Allah, fear of Him, repentance to Him, reliance on Him, and so forth.

The essence is that the category of inner worship is superior to that of apparent worship; indeed, apparent worship, if devoid of inner worship, has little or no effect.

**Third**: The favor in worship belongs to Allah from beginning to end.

The favor in worship belongs to Allah, and all credit is His from the start to the finish. It was He who granted existence, preparation, and sustenance; it was He who enabled guidance to it by giving the capability, hearts, hearing, and sight. He sent the messengers and revealed the scriptures. He is the One who made faith beloved in the hearts, created the will to worship within souls, then graciously accepts it and rewards for it. The servants do not deserve anything from Him - glorified be He - for everything is from Him and returns to Him, blessed and exalted.

***By Allah, had it not been for Allah, we would not have found guidance,***

***nor would we have given in charity, nor would we have prayed.***

The Exalted said: {They consider it a favor to you that they have accepted Islam. Say, "Do not consider your Islam a favor to me. Rather, Allah favors you that He has guided you to faith if you are truthful"} *[Al-Hujurat: 17]*.

And thus, the people of Paradise will say when they enter it - may Allah make us among them -: {And they will say, "Praise be to Allah, who has guided us to this, and we would not have been guided if Allah had not guided us"} *[Al-A'raf: 43]*.

**Fourth**: The best form of worship is striving to please Allah at all times, in accordance with the requirements of that time. The true worshipper's goal is to always seek Allah's pleasure, wherever it may be found. Their worship revolves around this pursuit, constantly

moving through the various stages of servitude. Whenever a new level of worship is revealed, they embrace it and devote themselves to it, until another level emerges. This is their continuous journey until they lay down their staff at the end of this life.

"Why do I worship Allah? And why has Allah commanded us to worship Him? And does He need our worship? And if He does not need it; then why command it?!"

These are questions that some youths ponder, and they may be a source of confusion for them, although I think that some of these questions are more obstructive and stubborn than genuinely seeking truth; because people are divided between those who believe in Allah and those who do not; for those who believe in Allah, they have such reverence, knowledge, and propriety towards Him that they understand that worship is a right due to their Lord by virtue of being His servant, and for those who are atheists, they do not believe in Allah at all; so what have they to do with questioning His worship at all! So, it remains only a skeptical question that the enemies of Allah spread among those of weak faith.

And with a lack of knowledge, some people might think that this skeptical question is difficult and problematic, but it is as trivial as can be; not every white thing is fat, and not every black thing is a date! Here, we have a wrong answer and a correct answer. As for the wrong answer: it is that Allah created us because He needs our worship! This answer is certainly wrong; for Allah did not command us to worship Him because He needs it; and whoever thinks this answer is correct believes that a request always implies a need, which is a purely materialistic view; not everyone who requests something needs it; a teacher asks a student to work hard in studying for the student's benefit, not for the teacher's! Thus, a request may be for the benefit of the one requested, not the requester.

Allah - exalted is He - has been proven, through definitive evidence - textual, rational, innate, and empirical - to be the great Creator Lord, and the true God; and if so, then He is absolutely self-sufficient, and the Self-Sufficient does not need anything from others; so what need would He have for us or our worship, and listen to His saying, exalted be He: {I did not create the jinn and humans except to worship Me. I do not want any provision from them, nor do I want them to feed Me. Indeed, Allah is the Provider, the Possessor of Strength} *[Al-Dhariyat: 56 - 58]*.

Amazing is the state of the son of Adam; he deems his worship a favor to his Lord or considers it excessive! {Cursed is man; how disbelieving is he.} *[Abasa: 17]*. And who are we in the face of divine majesty and lordly glory; {Say, "My Lord would not care about you if it were not for your supplication"} *[Al-Furqan: 77]*, and in the great divine (qudsi) hadith reported in Sahih Muslim (2577), Allah the Almighty says: "O My servants, you cannot reach My harm to harm Me, and you cannot reach My benefit to benefit Me, O My servants, if the first and the last of you, and your humans and jinn were as pious as the most pious heart of one among you, that would not increase My kingdom in anything, O My servants, if the first and the last of you, and your humans and jinn were on the most wicked heart of one man, that would not decrease from My kingdom anything."

One who does not appreciate the meaning of worship and the reality of servitude to his Lord will not understand. The wisdom of servitude and its purpose is only known by those who know the attributes of the Lord Almighty, His majesty, the meaning of divinity, and its reality, and that He, exalted be He, is the true God, and the reality of divinity is befitting only Him, and that worship is an obligation of His divinity, its effect, and its requirement.

And those who deny the reality of divinity and do not know it will not have a correct understanding of the wisdom of worship and its intended purpose, nor will they know that it is the ultimate purpose for which creation was made, for which the weighty beings were created, for which messengers were sent and scriptures were revealed, for which Paradise and Hell were created, and that to neglect creation from it involves an attribution to Allah that does not befit Him and He is exalted above it; for He did not create humans aimlessly nor will He leave them neglected, He said, {Do you think that We created you in jest} *[Al-Mu'minun: 115]*, meaning without wisdom! and He said: {Does man think that he will be left aimless} *[Al-Qiyamah: 36]*, meaning neglected, not commanded, nor prohibited, and neither rewarded nor punished.

Thus, it becomes clear that Allah did not command us to worship Him aimlessly, or because He needs it; rather, the correct answer is that Allah created us for the truth, and this truth involves the wisdom He loves, and He legislated worship for this wisdom, which boils down to two things: worship is a right due to Him, and a need for us.

## The first matter:

Worship is His right, exalted be He; "The right of Allah upon His servants is that they should worship Him and associate nothing with Him," thus spoke the truthful prophet ﷺ *[Hadith 5967, Book 30]*.

For He, glorified be He, commanded us to worship because it is His right; and when one demands his right, it must be given to him, even if he is wealthy. This is understood by all rational beings; a right is given to its holder by virtue of it being his right, not because he is in need of it; if a wealthy person has a financial claim

on you, would you object and say: You are wealthy; why do you demand your right?!

And Allah the Exalted has a great right over us from several aspects:

**Firstly**: because He is our Lord and Creator, and we are created for Him, and if there is a creator and a created, then worship is necessarily required; this is a self-evident matter!

**Secondly**: because He is our Master and Owner, and we are His enslaved servants, subdued under His authority.

**Thirdly**: because He is our Provider and Benefactor, and we are needy towards Him in everything, incapable of enriching ourselves in anything, having no power or strength except through Him; even in the morsel we eat, the sip we drink, and even the breath that moves through our bodies.

**Fourthly**: because He possesses absolute perfection, majesty, and beauty in His essence and attributes, and souls love absolute perfection and are humbled and magnified before it; therefore, Allah is worshipped because He is worthy of worship, and anyone who contemplates even a fraction of the perfection of His names and attributes realizes the truth of this.

This is a great matter often overlooked! And the problem that arises in regard to worship arises only from a lack of reverence for Allah, and the remedy is for one to return to oneself to correct this imbalance; contemplate the greatness of Allah, and your problems will vanish, read the book of the vast universe, and follow the places of perfection and benevolence in every small and great thing, and then the whisperings will flee from you.

"**Magnify, you will worship**"... This is the rule in brief; magnify Allah and appreciate Him as He deserves: and you will certainly

worship Him; you will be certain that He is worthy to be adored out of love, desire, and awe.

In conclusion: Worship is His right, exalted be He, a duty owed to Him, a duty upon us.

## The second matter:

Allah commanded us to worship Him not because He needs it; but because we need it; hence, He is gracious and beneficent to us when He commanded us to worship Him.

"**Worship: Our need, not His**"; for Allah wishes to benefit you, not to benefit from you, and true is he who said, "Everyone wants you for themselves, except for Allah; for He wants you for your own sake!"

The devout servants are indeed acting for themselves and their benefit, {If you do good, you do good for yourselves} *[Al-Isra: 7]*, {Whoever does righteousness, it is for himself} *[Fussilat: 46]*, {Whoever is guided, is only guided for the benefit of his soul} *[Al-Isra: 15]*, {And whoever purifies himself does so for the benefit of his soul} *[Fatir: 15]*, and in the previous divine (qudsi) hadith, Allah Almighty says in its conclusion: "O My servants, it is but your deeds that I account for you, then I will recompense you for them; whoever finds good, let him praise Allah, and whoever finds otherwise, let him not blame except himself."

In conclusion: Allah, the Gentle, the Generous, the Merciful, exalted be He, commanded us to worship for our benefit and happiness, and the attainment of tranquility and relief through it in this world, then to attain happiness and everlasting bliss in the Hereafter because of it.

Worship is not burdens nor shackles that one performs with difficulty and hardship; this is not said by those who know it and

have tasted its sweetness, rather, they are easy, manageable acts of worship, in which there is intimacy, joy, and happiness, and those who have not tasted it should try it!

***And he who has not tried does not know its worth.***

***So, try, and find the truth of what we've stated!***

He who knows worship will recognize—if he is fair—that the shackles are not in worship itself, but in turning away from it! Indeed, turning away from the worship of Allah is truly the hardship; it is estrangement with oneself, and aversion between the body and the soul, it is constriction, bewilderment, and loss, it is distress and misery. He who does not worship Allah is lost and miserable, bewildered, and thirsty, and suicide statistics are a witness that does not lie! And Allah speaks the truth: {And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life} *[Ta Ha: 124]*.

See what those engaged in worship and those who turn away from it openly declare! Which of them, by Allah, is on a more guided path?!

What about the condition of a deviant atheist who describes his state, being one of their contemporary pillars, saying: "We came from nothing, with nothing, for nothing!" Or another similar statement:

***"I came not knowing from where, but I arrived.***

***And indeed, I saw a path before me, so I walked.***

***And I will keep walking, whether I want this or not.***

***How did I come? How did I see my path? I do not know!***

***I do not know... and why do I not know? I do not know!"***

Is this wandering and deadly nihilism better in condition and outcome, or the state of the worshipper happy in his worship?

Where is this compared to the bliss of one whose heart dances in joy, pleasure, and companionship in his worship of his Lord and in the tranquility of His remembrance? To the extent that some of them say at the time of their death: "Oh, how delightful! " And another says, "There are times when the heart dances in pure joy," and a third says, "There are moments I say: if the people of Paradise are in such a state, indeed, they are in a good life!"

If you seek evidence of this, look at those who have recently converted to Islam - with hundreds of clips on the internet describing their feelings after their conversion - you will find that the first thing they mention about their condition after embracing Islam is that they found their souls, reconciled with themselves, put everything in itsu place, and experienced a pleasure beyond words... And Allah speaks the truth: {So is one who falls on his face better guided or one who walks upright on a straight path} *[Al-Mulk: 22]*.

Worship of Allah: light for insight, life for the heart, safety from being lost, preservation of life, fragrance for breaths, cleansing of filth, medicine for ailments, and a remedy for worries.

Worship: the charm of life, its joy, and its comfort, and he who truly knows its value incessantly praises Allah for it more than he praises Him for the blessings of health, wealth, and children; for it is the blessing with which Allah has honored and made us happy.

It is a blessing above all others!

So, do not say: Why did Allah command us to worship Him? Instead, say: Allah, all praise is due to You for commanding us to worship You!

Do not wonder why Allah commanded us to worship Him; rather, marvel at the generosity of your great worshipped Lord, exalted be He, that He accepted you as a servant to Him, and accepted your worship, despite its distractions and shortcomings!

And another matter related to this section:

Allah the Exalted has bestowed upon us the gift of worship so that our humanity may be realized.

Yes, worshiping Allah returns you to your true humanity. You—if you are fortunate—are a worshiper of your Lord because you are human; the human soul is naturally inclined to worship, and deep within it lies an urgent need for devotion; this is a characteristic of the human soul, whether it wills or not; the human being is a creature of worship, this is part of the reality of his humanity; just as he is inevitably a breather, eater, drinker, and thinker; so too he is inevitably a worshiper.

No human can be entirely devoid of worship; if he does not place worship in its proper context; if he does not worship Allah, he will certainly worship something else; he worships pleasure, worships an idol, worships a beloved, worships money, perhaps even worships his clothing! The Prophet ﷺ said as reported by Bukhari (2887): "Woe to the worshiper of the dinar, the dirham, the luxurious clothes, and the fine fabric."

Therefore: Every human is a worshiper; this is a universal rule with no exceptions; even those who claim to be atheists or non-religious: in reality, they are definitely indulging in the worship of their desires and whims, and Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, spoke the truth when he said:

***Their soul's dwell in desolation, their bodies toil—***

***Not in the pleasure of the Merciful, but in weary soil.***

*They fled from the servitude for which they were made,*

*only to be assessed by the chains of self and the devil's shade.*

In conclusion: Worship is obligatory, a blessing, and a necessity.

As much as it is obligatory upon us; it is a blessing we enjoy, and a need, indeed a necessity; for without it, our lives are dark and miserable. In acts of worship, there are wisdoms that are not understood! This—also—is something some youths question and find perplexing. And the answer will be in five points:

**First**: Most acts of worship are clear in meaning and their wisdom understood, and only a few have hidden wisdoms. If you reflect on the fundamentals of major acts of worship like prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage; these have great and apparent wisdoms, and if we were to fill many pages with the wisdoms derived from their legitimacy, we will never finish.

Yes, there are minor things where we are incapable of discerning their wisdom; why is the morning prayer two units and the evening prayer three, for example? This is a question that no one can definitively answer, and knowledge of it is left to the All-Knowing, the Wise, glorified be He.

Note that the wisdom behind the prayer itself is apparent, but the obscurity lies in some of its details.

**Second**: It is necessary to differentiate between what has hidden wisdom and what lacks wisdom altogether, between what we are ignorant of its wisdom and what we assert has no wisdom; the former exists, but the latter does not exist in acts of worship at all.

That is, to assert that any aspect of worship is pointless and utterly devoid of wisdom is impossible, and no one can claim this in legitimate acts of worship; that the morning prayer is two units

and not three or four is something whose wisdom we are ignorant of, but no one can assert that it lacks wisdom.

**Third**: It is not a condition of worship to understand the wisdom behind it.

If it is established that worship is a right of Allah upon His servants; then they have nothing left but to comply and obey.

That is, it is not a condition to perform an act that one understands every minute detail; the validity of the reason and the integrity of the purpose are sufficient to proceed.

For example: Most people use mobile phones without understanding how they work; how sound travels from one end to the other is unknown to most people, yet this does not affect their use of the device; it suffices that it meets their needs, and it is not necessary to understand every detail about it.

Take another example: Most people do not know how a car works, and have never heard that a combustion process occurs in which a mixture of air and fuel is burned, and so on; yet, we have never heard anyone object or refrain from using it because of their ignorance of the details; and while a car or a mobile phone is a tangible object, worship and its legitimacy and its reward involve an unseen aspect; and we are certain that it leads us to the greatest goal and benefit for us, which is the pleasure of Allah the Almighty.

Therefore, one should not hesitate at all to accept and perform worship due to ignorance of its wisdom; the foundation of servitude is based on submission, and part of submission is not delving too deeply into the details of wisdom in commands, prohibitions, and decrees.

If the Shariah mentions a wisdom and the intellect understands it, it is an increase in insight, and if it does not appear, it does not

weaken the resolve of the true worshiper, nor does it undermine his compliance; and this is the greatest wisdom: to submit to the command of Allah and follow it even without understanding the wisdom; to demonstrate the sincerity of your servitude to Allah, glorified be He.

**Fourth**: A person should abandon pride and adopt humility; what is known is very little compared to what is unknown, and minds are too weak to encompass knowledge of everything, {and Allah knows while you do not know} *[Al-Baqarah: 216]*, {and you have been given of knowledge only a little} *[Al-Isra: 85]*.

We infer about the wisdom we do not know from the wisdom we do know. This issue has been discussed in previous chapters, and we have learned that no one among creation can fully grasp all the hidden wisdoms of the Almighty.

Whoever does not accept this must equate the creation with the Creator in knowing what is beneficial and all the subtleties of wisdom, and how can the Lord of lords and the creature from the dust be equal! And can the wrongdoer, the ignorant, be equated with the Knower of the unseen!

In conclusion: Whoever does not humble himself in seeking the truth will not reach it; so, do not tire and do not cause weariness!

Remember the perfection of the Lord and the deficiency of the servant and know that the limitations of knowledge cannot stand as an objection[14].

(14) It would be beneficial to review Chapter Ten ("Allah Has Profound Wisdom") and recall the fifteen rules mentioned there.

**Fifth**: Whenever you find any matter of Shariah or fate perplexing, I advise you to remember a simple and comforting response, which I call: recalling the principle.

Meaning: If something about matters of fate or Shariah perplexes you or perplexes someone else and you wish to discuss it with them; it might be wise not to delve directly into the issue. Do not attack it directly, but rather, return—by yourself or with your interlocutor—to the beginning, through the following stages:

**First stage**: The affirmation of Allah's Lordship; is Allah, the Great Lord, existent or not? What do you believe? If you are assured in the answer, move to the second stage; otherwise, go back and address this topic within yourself, and bring to mind the evidence of Allah's existence and His Lordship.

**Second stage**: The affirmation of the highest attributes; the Great Lord, glorified be He, is characterized by the highest, perfect attributes in all aspects, and He cannot be a Lord without them, including His profound wisdom and comprehensive knowledge. If you are assured of this, proceed to the third stage; otherwise, address yourself and reflect on the evidence of these attributes and their manifestations in existence.

**Third stage**: The affirmation of the truthfulness of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the authenticity of his message; if you are certain of this, proceed to the fourth stage; otherwise, address this matter within yourself, and recall the proofs of the Prophet's truthfulness ﷺ.

**Fourth stage**: The validity of Islam; if you are certain that Islam is the true religion revealed by Allah, proceed to the fifth stage; otherwise, address this matter within yourself, and examine the proofs of the validity of Islam.

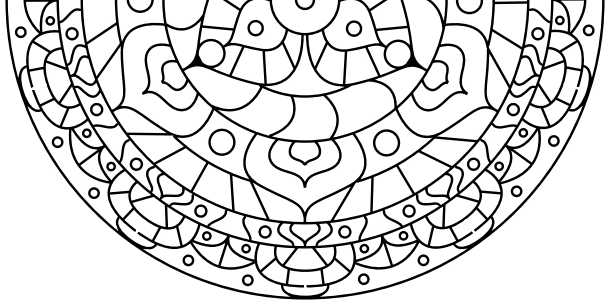
**Fifth stage**: The preservation of the Quran and Sunnah; if you are certain of this, then praise be to Allah; otherwise, address this matter within yourself and understand the convincing evidence indicating that the Quran and Sunnah are preserved by Allah's protection.

Approach the matter in this way, step by step, and then when you reach the problematic issue, it will seem easier to manage with the help of Allah.

If you proceed in this gradual manner, the problem will appear simpler in your eyes by Allah's will; for those who are certain of these five matters will find any complex legal or fate-related issue to be minor, and it will not affect their faith, and they will place the issue in its minor place, and it will be easier for them to resolve it with Allah's guidance.

### *For further benefit*

I recommend something I have previously advised, which is: reading the "Al-'Ubudiyyah" by Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah. Those who have read it, I advise to read it again, and those who have not, I advise them to read it.



# Chapter Thirty-Two: Zodiac Signs: Reality or Fantasy

Zodiac signs—or constellations—are the positions through which the sun passes during the year, consisting of twelve signs, each trio representing one of the four seasons.

Astronomers have divided the "sun's path," which it traverses in a year, into twelve sections, each called a zodiac sign, occupying 30 degrees of longitude. In each sign, the sun aligns with several stars connected by imaginary lines, forming a specific image of something.

The focus of our discussion in this episode is not only on the sun's constellations but also on the moon's phases and its conjunctions with the stars.

The moon's stations are the positions it occupies each night, totaling twenty-eight stations, with the moon occupying a new station each night.

Astronomy and the study of the stars, when partially understood, can increase one's faith in Allah and reverence for Him. Allah, the Exalted, said: {It is He who made the sun a shining light and the moon a derived light and determined for it phases—that you may

know the number of years and the account *[of time]*. Allah has not created this except in truth} *[Yunus: 5]*. This is all part of the truth for which Allah created the heavens, the earth, and everything in them, and He also said: {Blessed is He who has placed in the sky great stars and placed therein a *[burning]* lamp and luminous moon} *[Al-Furqan: 61]*. Thus, the Exalted mentions the constellations in a context of praising Himself, highlighting His great signs.

Regardless of the specifics, our discussion here is not about astronomy per se but about what is known as astrology in its modern guise.

The concept of astrology is linked to planets and astronomical zodiac signs and is among the myths that have persisted in ancient nations and continue to this day. They associate the celestial bodies and their movements and positions in their constellations and stations with fate and fortune, as well as linking the time of a person's birth with their behavior, traits, and personality, which is also said to be influenced by the zodiac sign of their birth period. For instance, they say that those born under the sign of Scorpio are characterized by mystery and secrecy, while those born under Pisces are noted for their impulsive nature, and so forth, as we will clarify, Allah willing.

## Reason for Discussing This Topic

The phenomenon of claiming knowledge of the unseen, astrology, and fortune-telling and reliance on zodiac signs is a form of ancient-modern ignorance.

It is a major affliction in this age, especially with the dominant influence of modern communication tools on people's minds and lives. Many young men and women—due to a lack of attention to creed—engage in these matters, which bring them great harm while

they think they are doing well. How many websites or accounts are there on the network that display signs like "Your luck with us" or "Your luck in your sign," or those books or magazines that contain zodiac signs in which they mention fortunes or misfortunes: "Were you born under the sign of Capricorn? Then you will win a monetary prize this week, or you will meet a new friend," and other such nonsense.

There are numerous websites that are easily accessible, like the site of a spiritual healer named so-and-so, or the site of the spiritual healer Mrs. so-and-so: "What do you want? We are at your service, ask and wish, want to know the unseen? Want to attract a lover? Want to gain money? All you must do is contact us, and we will lead you to what you desire!" And those without knowledge or weak in faith take such matters lightly.

Among the youth are those who do not start their day without checking their horoscope on a website, staring intently at the section for their sign, either smiling optimistically or closing it and remaining gloomy for the rest of the day!

At the start of each new year, annual predictions pour in from all directions, filling TV screens and social media. For many, planning for the new year is linked to their zodiac predictions; they do not take any steps before ensuring that luck is on their side!

Some women schedule their cesarean deliveries to match their child's birthdate with a specific zodiac sign, hoping to influence their child's personality according to their belief!

A segment of young men and women base their friendships on knowledge of zodiac signs; in their view, some signs are compatible with them, and some are not!

Even in marriage, they say, or she says: This person is from such and such a sign, so they are not suitable for me!

I read from someone who said, "I cannot start any new project before making sure that my zodiac sign is suitable for this step!"

And I read from one woman who describes her passion for zodiac predictions as "oxygen," saying, "I not only eagerly await the annual predictions, but I also start every day by reading my sign and what the planets and constellations have in store for me and my family!" Unfortunately, this is a regrettable reality.

## Reasons for the Fascination with Zodiac Signs

The attempt to know the unseen, what will happen in the future, and to explore what the coming days hold through reading zodiac signs, palms, or coffee cups has become widespread these days, especially among women, both young and old. The obsession with zodiac signs results from several reasons:

1- Escaping from a grim reality! Some try to escape their reality by clinging to illusions and envisioning a better future.

2- Imitation: It is no secret that a single image or post on social media today can influence many followers of the writer. The problem of imitation is significant; she wants to be like her friend: starting her day with coffee and reading her horoscope! This is a stark reality; fascination with zodiac signs can stem from a love of imitating others and following what is called the "trend."

3- Curiosity and the desire for entertainment: The beginning might be a form of curiosity and a love for exploration or amusement. Discovering the unknown is enjoyable for some: something new, and plenty of free time; why not try! Unfortunately, it's an ugly experiment that can turn into an addiction and obsession over time.

4- Zodiac signs provide a sense of comfort; reading zodiac signs can be comforting for some people; as they tend to bias towards positive things and do not predict many negative events, hence they can quickly deceive them.

5- A sense of control: Some people desire—through knowing what the future holds as falsely told by the zodiac signs—to control their lives, erroneously thinking they can manage it.

6- The adoption of zodiac signs by some media outlets and those who claim to be astronomers, and their constant appearance on screens, has normalized this wrong.

## The Shariah Foundation on the Topic of Stars, Zodiac Signs, and Engagement with Them

The fascination with zodiac signs, stars, and planets we discuss is called astrology, and astrology involves the reprehensible practice of stargazing. This aspect of star knowledge is blameworthy and is called astrology, while other aspects are not blameworthy. An astrologer engages in astrology and is akin to soothsayers and fortune-tellers. Scholars unanimously agree on the prohibition of looking into zodiac signs to know the unseen, as there is consensus among scholars that this violates the Shariah, and it also contradicts reason; there is no connection between earthly events and the planets, stars, their stations, and their conjunctions, and anyone who claims a relationship exists is deceitfully mistaken.

***Do not await the stars for deeds you undertake,***

***for it is Allah who acts, not goat nor ram dictate.***

To lay the foundation for the topic, it is stated that the study of stars is divided into two categories: blameworthy and not blameworthy:

**The first category** - which is blameworthy - is the knowledge of influence.

**The second category** - which is not blameworthy - is the knowledge of guidance.

The knowledge of influence is divided into two types: practical influence and knowledge influence.

Practical influence refers to the belief that stars and planets manage this universe or affect our behavior, and that events on earth are merely reactions to the actions of stars and planets. The origin of idol worship partly stems from this belief, as idols are statues that worshippers use to remember their celestial or earthly deities. For earthly ones, they erect statues of saints and the righteous to represent them. For celestial ones, they create temples—houses and structures—depicting stars and planets, or they make idols and seek closeness to them.

The second type: Knowledge influence, which refers to the argument used by proponents of this deception, based on the movements of stars and planets, their conjunctions, and separations, predicting future and unseen events. They claim that certain events will occur when a particular star appears.

There is no doubt that these two types constitute polytheism idolatry.

As for the first type: It is clear idolatry in terms of Lordship, as Allah is the sole sovereign, master, and manager of the affairs of the universe, without any partner.

As for the second type: It involves associating others with Allah in the knowledge of the unseen. Allah alone possesses the knowledge of the unseen, as stated, {Say, "None in the heavens and earth knows the unseen except Allah"} *[Al-Naml: 65]*, and in Sahih

al-Bukhari (4697), from the hadith of Ibn Umar, the Prophet ﷺ said: "The keys of the unseen are five; no one knows them but Allah: No one knows what will happen tomorrow but Allah..." and so forth.

Thus, anyone who asserts that tomorrow will bring such and such from the matters of the unseen, or next week, or next month, claims to share with Allah in the knowledge of the unseen, and Allah is unique in possessing this knowledge.

Allah also commanded His Prophet to deny having knowledge of the unseen for himself, despite him being the best of Allah's creation, and more so for others. Allah says, {Say, "I hold not for myself *[the power of]* benefit or harm, except as Allah has willed. And if I knew the unseen, I could have acquired much wealth, and no harm would have touched me"} *[Al-A'raf: 188]*. Therefore, both these types are considered major shirk. And truly, he who said so spoke truthfully.

***The knowledge of the stars and the knowledge of Muhammad's law***

***in a servant's heart, they do not coexist.***

***Are they indicators of happiness or misery?***

***No, by the One who created all and fashioned me.***

***He who asserts their influence is indeed neglecting.***

***He appropriates the law with another's saying.***

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever learns a branch of astrology has learned a branch of magic; the more he increases in that knowledge, the more he increases in sin" *[Abu Dawud 3905]*. Astrology is included in magic because magic involves hidden and subtle effects, and

it influences souls, much like astrology does. It is also akin to soothsaying, and the rulings for both are remarkably similar.

There is a third type related to knowledge influence, but it is not considered major idolatry; instead, it is minor idolatry. This is claimed by the proponents of this deception who allege that events occur due to the influence of these stars and planets, while Allah is the true Creator, and these are merely causes.

Indeed, what they claim is illusory; Allah has not made the stars causes for these events. Those who believe in a cause that Allah has not set, neither by divine law nor decree, are engaging in minor idolatry.

It is important to note that Islamic scholars do not deny that some celestial bodies might be a cause for certain events on earth, and Shariah does not deny what is real. Perhaps Allah makes something in the celestial bodies a cause for a tangible or legal effect on earth; for example, the sun is a cause for ripening fruits. It may also be a legal cause for fear, as the Prophet ﷺ said about the sun and the moon, "The sun and the moon are two signs from the signs of Allah; they do not eclipse for the death or life of anyone. Allah uses these signs to instill fear among His servants" *[Bukhari 1048]*.

Thus, they are a cause for creating fear among the servants, which does not fall within what we are discussing. We are discussing attributing celestial bodies as a cause for something, and in reality, they are not a cause, but rather this is an illusion in their minds. An example of this is the saying of the Prophet ﷺ after rain fell, "Allah said, 'Some of my servants woke up believing in Me and some disbelieving. Whoever said that the rainfall is due to the Blessings and Mercy of Allah, believes in Me and disbelieves in the stars. And whoever said that it rained because of such and such star, believes in the stars and disbelieves in Me'" *[Bukhari 846, Muslim 71]*.

Regarding deducing from celestial occurrences about earthly events of the unseen, there is no doubt this is a form of deception, evidenced by what the people of ignorance believed, that if the sun or moon were eclipsed, it indicated the birth or death of a great person. The Prophet clarified the falsity of this belief, saying, "The sun and the moon are two signs from the signs of Allah. They do not eclipse for the death or life of anyone."

There is no type of scientific study or report from reputable research centers that proves any connection between the zodiac signs and people's traits or earthly events.

All this concerns the blameworthy branch of astrology, the knowledge of influence. As for the knowledge of guidance: it involves understanding the movements of the stars and planets and their positions for practical benefits, either to know a place or time, which is permissible. For instance, recognizing by the appearance of the moon in a certain phase that winter has begun, upon which they base their activities such as farming.

In every case: there is no harm in a person acquiring knowledge about the planets to benefit in matters of religion or worldly life, which may be legitimate knowledge like knowing the direction of prayer or midday; although in modern times, this has become less beneficial with the availability of modern devices.

The ruling for someone who reads these horoscopes in newspapers, communicates with astrologers through media, or watches them has several situations:

**The first situation**: If the viewing is for the purpose of testing, examining, or exposing their deception, then this is permissible and may even be necessary.

**The second situation**: If the viewing is out of curiosity or for entertainment, as commonly expressed today as "just curious," without believing this deception, then this is a reprehensible and forbidden act. The doer is disobedient to Allah and His Messenger, exposing themselves to temptation and risking their faith. In Sahih Muslim (537) from the hadith of Muawiya bin Al-Hakam, "O Messenger of Allah, there are things we did in ignorance, like going to fortune tellers," He said, "Do not go to fortune tellers."

**The third situation:** When someone goes to a soothsayer and believes them or reads horoscopes and believes what they say. This person falls under the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: "Whoever goes to a soothsayer or fortune teller and believes what they say has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad ﷺ." Narrated by Ahmad (9536) with an authentic chain. Among what was revealed to Muhammad ﷺ is: {Say: "No one in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen except Allah"} *[Al-Naml: 65]*. Therefore, whoever believes that anyone has knowledge of the unseen that Allah alone possesses has disbelieved, as they have denied what Allah revealed to His Messenger ﷺ.

In summary: Horoscopes and similar claims of knowing the unseen—like palm reading and coffee cup reading—are purely fictional, looking into them and promoting them among people is prohibited, and believing in them is part of disbelief and an affront to monotheism, in addition to being an indication of weak intellect; how can it be believed that people born under a particular sign share specific traits! This notion contradicts the reality that people born at the same hour do not all share the same traits, let alone those born on the same day or month.

And you see twins born at the same hour, yet their personalities differ completely, so where is the influence of the zodiac sign here? According to their claims, they should be identical!

This also shows the falsehood of their statements, as astrologers themselves differ on many things, such as the implications of zodiac signs on people's temperaments and traits. A researcher compared what two magazines publishing horoscopes released on the same day said about a particular sign and found contradictions, indicating that the issue has no scientific basis and is merely deception aimed at those with weak minds.

And, by Allah, if someone randomly altered the statements of astrologers, turning fortunes into misfortunes, males into females, and females into males, and then made predictions, their judgments would be just like those of the astrologers! Sometimes accurate, often wrong; there is nothing but guessing, false assumptions, and vague statements.

Therefore, it is essential to be cautious about engaging with them, to advise abandoning them for the sake of Allah, to rely on Him in all matters, and to be content with His decree.

Beware of playing with what you value most—your faith. This situation is not a trivial matter; it is extremely dangerous and could completely undermine your faith.

## Harms Arising from Reading and Believing in Horoscopes

Reading and believing in horoscopes bring numerous harms, particularly for many who have developed an obsession and addiction to following them. Here are some of these harms:

1. Disbelief in Allah Almighty - as previously explained - and woe to those who lose their religion.
2. Non-acceptance of prayers.
3. Weakness, fragility, and abandonment of legitimate means; one who looks at horoscopes might think they will not succeed,

leading them to abandon efforts, causing failure and missing good, all due to the delusions created by reliance on horoscopes.

4. Weakening reliance on Allah Almighty and abandoning seeking His aid and Istikhara (seeking guidance from Allah in prayer).

5. Horoscopes propagate the misguided doctrine of fatalism, which leads a person to believe they have no choice or power; that they are born under a certain sign with fixed traits and are helpless to progress, improve, or change their behavior.

6. Wasting time on something not only unbeneficial but also forbidden.

7. Falling into the illusion of control; many who regularly read their horoscopes look for guidance, not just comfort. They seek what they should do through them, which creates an illusion of control over their lives by knowing what will happen in the future, and all of this is merely an illusion without any truth.

8. Errors in decision-making: Regardless of the person's goals who follows the horoscopes—whether seeking friendships, managing financial budgets, or dealing with health issues—horoscopes will cause many problems for them. They significantly influence their behavior and decision-making. The information obtained from horoscopes is baseless, and relying on it prevents them from making wise decisions or developing their potential.

9. Horoscopes induce despair and pessimism; if the horoscopes carry foreboding future news, despair and hopelessness fall upon those who believe them, leading them into a spiral of anxiety and psychological turmoil. Being affected by horoscopes leads to anxiety about the future, turning a person into a slave to fictional ideas, fostering a tendency to submit to events that may never happen.

The consequences of relying on these predictions are truly terrifying; I read in an Arab newspaper about a young man suffering from financial distress who began following his horoscope daily, hoping to hear some positive news promising an imminent resolution. However, after the predictions failed, his psychological state deteriorated, and he resorted to suicide!

10. Allah may punish those obsessed with horoscopes by the very opposite of their intentions; Ibn al-Qayyim says, "It is hardly known for anyone who relied on the stars for what they should do or avoid except that they met the most horrible and ugliest of disasters; in return for their intentions, and misfortunes befell them from where they thought they would achieve their happiness. This is Allah's law for His servants which does not change, and His custom that does not alter: that whoever relies on something other than Him, trusts someone other than Him, or leans on a creature to manage him; Allah causes him, because of it or from its side, the opposite of what he pinned his hopes on. Look at how strongly the Barmecides were attached to the stars, even in the hours of their eating, their riding, and most of their actions, and see how severe their disaster was" *[Miftah Dar al-Sa'adah: 1223/3]*.

## What is the Cure for Addiction and Obsession with Horoscopes?

In this part of our discussion, we are not talking about a fleeting amusement; we are discussing a psychological illness some people have fallen into, which is the intense attachment to horoscopes or what is called "horoscope obsession." And what I mention is not an exaggeration; there truly are people who are captivated—and if you will, enslaved—by these horoscopes, and the issue is growing, and Allah is the one sought for help.

It is truly pitiful for those who have fallen into the clutches of this disease; they are in a miserable state. Being obsessed with horoscopes is like seeing the world through a small hole in a narrow tunnel! You lose the ability to thoroughly enjoy your life or to care about anything beyond your obsession.

The most crucial step in treating an attachment to horoscopes—which is defiance of Allah and His law—is to fear Allah, magnify His command, remember His punishment, and then hasten to repentance. If you are a Muslim, you have no choice but to accept Allah's ruling on this matter once you have heard it; {It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should thereafter have any choice about their affair} *[Al-Ahzab: 36]*.

Repent, sincerely rely on Allah, think well of Him, and hope for good from Him; for all good is in His hands.

Entrust your affairs to Him—He is closer to you than you to yourself.

Here are some steps or reasons that can help overcome an obsession with horoscopes:

1. Distance yourself from the source of the ailment. Being close to sources that provide horoscope predictions, such as TV programs, YouTube videos, or social media accounts, can prolong your captivity in this affliction. Putting distance between yourself and these sources will help you break free with Allah's help. Stop feeding the obsession, and to break your obsession, you need to starve it! It's tough initially, but after a short period, by Allah's grace, you'll start feeling it weaken gradually.
2. Occupy your time with other things besides horoscope predictions. Engage in a new, useful activity away from them,

start a new hobby, and you will find a way, with Allah's help, to overcome your situation.

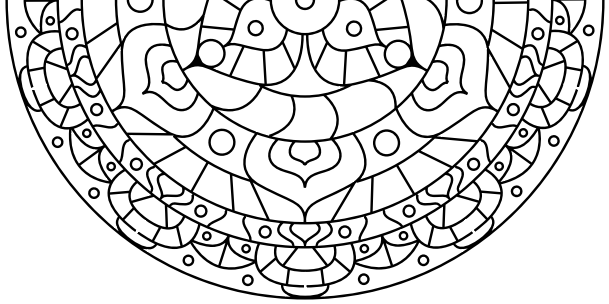
3. Be patient and persevere! If you want to rid yourself of this attachment, you must force yourself to do so. Sometimes it can be challenging; don't despair and be patient, as you still have the potential to succeed, but it might take more time.

4. Distract your thoughts from horoscopes. Remember the reason behind your attempt to rid yourself of your obsession with them so you can see beyond and enjoy life while preserving your faith. Have several enjoyable distractions ready, which you can turn to whenever thoughts related to horoscopes come to mind; distract yourself with sports, reading beneficial books, or socializing with virtuous colleagues.

5. Learn to live in the moment. Learn to be consistently diligent; instead of thinking about the future, engage all your senses in everything happening around you. Observe what is happening in front of you and capitalize on what you can, instead of thinking about and fearing the future. And Allah knows best.

### *For further benefit*

I recommend reading a highly beneficial passage from the words of Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, which provides an interesting alert on how history disproves the judgments of astrologers in his book "Miftah Dar al-Sa'adah" (3/1175-1273) published by Dar Alam al-Fawa'id.



# Chapter Thirty-Three: How Do We Understand the Sharia Evidence? (Part One)

We are now facing a hot topic that is constantly discussed, with severe and significant errors related to it, and it greatly affects the youth.

We are suffering from a major problem, which is that some people do not know the correct answer to this question: How do we understand the verses of the Quran and the Hadiths of the Sunnah?

The reason for this is that we live amid knowledge chaos; unfortunately, the Sharia evidence has become, in many cases, an open field tampered with by whoever wishes, interpreted according to their opinion, and decided upon according to their desires. Moreover, you do not find the audacity in discussing economic, astronomical, or health matters as you find it when discussing legal issues and the meanings of the Book and the Sunnah. Just look at social media, media channels, and what they contain of articles, tweets, clips, and interviews. Here one says: It is my right to understand the revelation as I please, another decides on the theory of the fluid and dynamic meaning, a third wants to apply

to the evidence the theory of the death of the author, a fourth determines the historical context of the text, and a fifth follows the path of interpretation, and so on.

This is a major intellectual chaos[15]!

Enemies of the Sharia today want to finish it off by tampering with the principles and rules of understanding its evidence.

They want to demolish it from within; by making its evidence vague and loose, or relative in its implications, or they confine its sovereignty to the time of revelation. Therefore, it is sidelined and its impact fades among Muslims, and it becomes no more than folk heritage—or "folklore"—that we pride ourselves on like other heritages, without it governing our lives or framing our positions.

Therefore, it is necessary to discuss this topic and to frequently emphasize it; to counteract this rampant scientific chaos.

It is essential to establish that understanding the evidence of Sharia has strict rules and solid controls, which must not be neglected.

We must recognize that there are those who spread doubts, dilute the religion, and pollute it with whims.

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(15) One of them—and there are many like him—is prolific in his segments. In each segment, he delves into an exploration of a verse or hadith and emerges with a new interpretation unknown to anyone in the Muslim community. He disregards scientific principles, linguistic contexts, or anything of the sort, producing interpretations so ludicrous they could make even the grieving laugh. Regrettably, his views number in the thousands!

We must be cautious, for the Prophet ﷺ said: "When you see those who follow the ambiguous parts of it; those are the ones whom Allah has named, so beware of them" *[Bukhari 4547, Muslim 2665]*.

## Do We Need Guidelines to Understand Religion?

Some people say: Religion is clear enough for everyone to understand, and no one has the right to monopolize the interpretation of religion; our religion is not a clergy-based religion! This statement is broad; it contains both truth and falsehood. The clarification is that not all revelation evidence is on the same level; some are understandable by everyone, like the verses {And establish prayer and give zakat} *[Al-Baqarah: 43]*, {And worship Allah and associate nothing with Him} *[An-Nisa: 36]*, {He created the heavens and the earth} *[Al-An'am: 1]*—these are clear and understood by everyone.

However, some understandings are specialized to scholars. Indeed, our Sharia does not have a clergy or ecclesiastical figures, but there are scholars, people of remembrance, those who are skilled in deducing from the evidence. Otherwise, what would be the purpose of the verse: {So ask the people of the reminder} *[An-Nahl: 43]*, or {Those who derive their rulings from it} *[An-Nisa: 83]*, or {And those firmly rooted in knowledge} *[Al-Imran: 7]*, and the saying of the Prophet ﷺ "The superiority of the scholar over the worshipper is like my superiority over the least of you" *[Tirmidhi 2685]*.

Therefore, the previous statement is misleading; in fact, it is a fallacy. It must be noted. The intent of some who propose this idea is to open the door for every falsifier to distort the Book and the Sunnah as they wish, without a word said against them! Yes, seeking knowledge is not restricted to anyone, but speaking about religion is restricted; you have the right to study and learn, and if

you reach a level of knowledge and become profound in it, then speak and decide what you reach by your efforts in the light of the scholars' formulations. However, with ignorance, you do not have that right. Sharia is vast and significant, and there are legal realities, customary realities, and linguistic realities; on what basis will the ignorant person interpret the text? There are synonyms, derivations, shared meanings, implications of verbs and letters of meanings, implications of addition and conjunction, commands and prohibitions, general and specific, absolute and restricted, abrogating and abrogated, ambiguous and clarified, obligatory and customary rulings, discussions on conflict and preference, authentic and weak hadiths, reports from companions, etc.

Thus, there are levels of understanding the evidence that are scholarly and require knowledge and a capability that is acquired after establishing the rules of understanding the Book and the Sunnah according to the methodology of the predecessors. Otherwise, the ignorant person who "does as they please" and blindly interprets the evidence will do more harm than good and will bring about ridiculous and lamentable outcomes.

Let me give examples: One understood from the verse {And *[wash]* your feet to the ankles} *[Al-Ma'idah: 6]* that the ankle is the back of the foot or the heel, not the protruding bone at the bottom of the leg, so he was washing his foot up to the heel and not the ankle!

It was mentioned about someone who heard a hadith in "Sahih Muslim (966)" that Saad bin Abi Waqqas, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "Dig a niche for me, and erect bricks on me vertically, as was done with the Prophet ﷺ." The term used was known to mean clay bricks, but he understood it as 'milk', so whenever someone died, he brought a container of milk and poured it on the grave, believing it to be following the Sunnah!

Another heard the hadith affirmed in *[Bukhari 5468, Muslim 286]* that the Prophet ﷺ was brought a boy to bless him, and the boy urinated on him, so he rinsed it with water. This poor soul thought the Prophet ﷺ was the one who urinated on the child and believed this to be part of the Sunnah! And Allah is the one sought for help.

## How Do We Reconcile the Rules for Understanding Religion with the Existence of Ijtihad in Some Religious Matters?

The answer to this lies in understanding two crucial principles:

**First**: Ijtihad is one thing, and whimsical interpretation is another.

**Second**: The existence of disagreement does not eliminate the obligation to follow.

Following the revelation is always a mandatory duty for everyone; {And whatever you differ about, its decision is with Allah.} This is a conclusive matter.

From these two principles, it follows that there are disciplined scientific methodologies that govern the handling of issues of ijtihad according to the status of the person dealing with them, whether as a mujtahid, a follower, or somewhere in between. Thus, there is no chaos in these matters, no arbitrariness, and no following of desires.

A person should not whimsically choose or select what aligns with their desires, or—as they say—choose what aligns with the contemporary context when scholars disagree or when the issue appears ambiguous. Instead, a Muslim's ultimate goal should be to seek Allah's pleasure and to achieve His command as much as possible; because, heart and form, condition and outcome, he is a servant owned by the Almighty King, {Say, "Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds, no partner has He"} *[Al-An'am: 162 - 163]*.

## Most Modern Distorted Methodologies in Understanding the Qur'an and Sunnah

The methods that deviate from the correct approach in understanding the evidence are many, but they converge on two points:

1. Distorting the words from their places and following the ambiguous parts.
2. The space I must discuss this is limited, so I will focus my discussion on one approach, which is the modernist approach in evaluating and understanding the evidence. This approach is the most present today in the media and social networks.

I will summarize my discussion of this approach in six points:

- **The first point**: The modernist project is purely a Western endeavor, not connected to our heritage in any way. It originates from a Western framework, is a product of Western philosophy, and results from Western culture. It aims to impose the Western experience regarding their religion onto ours, treating our religion as they have treated their sacred texts. Thus, their entire discourse is nothing but a rehash of what Western modernists have said, while they overlook the unique circumstances of the Western context and the divide between science and the church, between their religion and reason. It is clear that their Enlightenment revolution was built upon the ruins of their religion and traditions.

- **The second point:** Modernist thought establishes its initial stance on revelation through two assertions:

**The first assertation** is the denial of its divine origin, meaning they argue that what is considered revelation is merely a human construct.

- **The second assertation** is the denial of its preservation, claiming that the Quran has been tampered with. As for the Hadith, they

attempt to undermine the infallibility of the Prophet ﷺ and strip the Hadith entirely or partially of its status as revelation, or they doubt its preservation and continuity.

- **The third point**, modernists aim to eliminate the reference framework a Muslim relies on in their faith and worship, leading to confusion, doubt, and susceptibility to any assumption, removing any definitive aspect of faith and turning Islam into vague rituals shaped by moods and desires.
- **The fourth point**: Among their practices is the dismissal of any efforts by early Muslim scholars; they disregard their consensus, understanding, and rules, inventing alternative methodologies.

  From this perspective, they establish the theory of the fluid, dynamic meaning, implying that revelation has multiple interpretations, not a singular meaning intended by Allah. Everyone is entitled to interpret it as they wish, from whatever angle they approach it.

  Furthermore, they advocate for the historical context of the legal text, limiting its authority to a specific time and place, often referred to as "Spatiotemporality."

  They also claim that the text belongs to the reader, not the author, applying this concept to the Quran and Hadith.

  Lastly, they promote reliance solely on the Quran, dismissing the need for the Hadith.
- **The fifth point**: Their primary fight is against the establishment of the principles of deduction because the governance of revelation cannot be dismantled without disassembling the protective principles surrounding it.
- **The sixth point**: The ultimate goal of this modernist project can be summarized in one word: it revolves around removing the sanctity of revelation, or at least casting doubt on it. They promote

this under the guise of "re-reading the heritage," which refers to the Qur'an and Sunnah. Their aim is not to seek guidance from it but to criticize it, undermine trust in it, strip it of its sanctity, dismantle its established facts, and ultimately shift the focus from the divine to the human, from revelation to reason, and from the hereafter to this world alone.

This is a brief overview of the project, and the people of Islam must be wary of it.

## How do We Understand the Evidence of the Quran and the Sunnah Correctly?

I will summarize the answer by dividing it into two parts, each with principles and rules:

**The first part**: The basic rules.

**The second part**: The principles of understanding.

As for the first part, it is the basic rules, or if you wish, the prerequisites that pave the way for understanding the text, which we cannot understand the Sharia text without recalling and considering them, summarized in ten rules:

**The first rule**: The revelation is the reference to which we turn, given precedence over others, and there is no guidance except through it.

The Quran and the Sunnah are the source of reception, they are the reference for Muslims in everything big and small, they are the arbitrators, and to them, disputes are referred; {And whatever you disagree about, its decision is with Allah} *[Ash-Shura:10]* and goodness, blessing, and guidance can only come through the revelation; Allah said about His Prophet ﷺ: {And if I am rightly guided, it is by what my Lord reveals to me} *[Saba:50]*.

The reason for the precedence, sanctity, and referentiality are three matters:

**Firstly**: The Quran is the speech of Allah, and the Sunnah is a revelation from Allah, not recited. Thus, the revelation derives its sanctity and greatness from this aspect.

**Secondly**: The perfection of the revelation and its infallibility, and its freedom from any deficiency or error; {This is the Book about which there is no doubt} *[Al-Baqarah:2]*, Allah said: {Alif, Lam, Ra. *[This is]* a Book whose verses are perfected and then detailed from One who is Wise and Acquainted} *[Hud:1]*.

**Thirdly**: There is no way to guidance except through it.

**The second rule**: The Quran and the Sunnah are inseparable and do not contradict each other, and neither can exist without the other.

This has been discussed in detail in previous chapters.

**The third rule**: The religion is complete, there is no need to complement or patch it up; Allah said: {Today, I have perfected your religion for you} and He, the Most High, said {We did not neglect in the Scripture anything} *[Al-An'am: 38]* and He, the Exalted, said {And We have sent down the Scripture to you as an explanation for everything, a guidance, a mercy, and good news for the Muslims} *[An-Nahl: 89]*.

**The fourth rule**: The apparent meanings of the evidence are intended by the speaker and understood by the addressee.

The basis in the purpose of the discourse—which is the reason an intelligent being speaks—is that it intends a meaning and wants it to be understood by the listener. If this were not the case, the speech would be puzzles and riddles, or flowy, insubstantial speech that is of no use and unnecessary, which is not the case with the

revelation nor is it fitting for it. Allah, exalted be He, describes the Quran saying: {O mankind, there has come to you a guidance from your Lord and a healing for what is in the hearts and guidance and mercy for the believers} *[Yunus: 57]*, and He, exalted be He, said about the description of the Quran: {And We have sent down to you the Reminder that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them, and perhaps they will reflect} *[An-Nahl: 44]*, and He said: {And We have certainly made the Quran easy for remembrance, so is there any who will remember?} *[Al-Qamar: 17]*.

The Quran is described as an explanation, clarification, and elucidator. Therefore, it is impossible that Allah, exalted be He, has sent down speech without meaning, and it is impossible that the entire nation does not know its meaning.

Thus, it follows that Allah, the Almighty, has an intended judgment in His speech that can be reached, and it can be understood correctly by those who do so, and missed by those who miss it; otherwise, what would be the purpose of the command to follow it: {Follow what has been sent down to you from your Lord} *[Al-A'raf: 3]*.

And if it were as the modernists say, that the texts are flexible and everyone understands what they want, then how will we judge by the Quran? And Allah says: {And judge between them by what Allah has sent down} *[Al-Ma'idah: 49]*.

And how can there be accountability? And Allah, the Most High, says: {And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed—such are the disbelievers} *[Al-Ma'idah: 44]*.

And what is the benefit of the prohibition of speaking about Allah without knowledge if everyone can speak in the texts as they desire and understand them as they wish?!

**The fifth rule**: There is no contradiction between the correct transmitted and the correct reasoned. This—also—is a topic that has been extensively discussed in previous chapters.

**The sixth rule**: The evidence of revelation is preserved. And they have been preserved in this condition (preservation) since the dawn of the Prophethood to this day. Revelation is preserved in lines, hearts, and pages, guarded and protected, so there is no room for doubt or for confidence to be shaken.

The Quran is preserved from change, addition, and omission, and no one can add a letter or omit it, and the Sunnah is preserved by the efforts of preservation and guarding appointed by Allah, so no one can falsely attribute to it or err in it except that it becomes apparent to the people of knowledge, and this is also a matter previously detailed in a past chapter.

**The seventh rule**: There is no contradiction between the evidence of the Sharia and the objectives of the Sharia. And this is a matter I wish to dwell upon:

There is no doubt that Islamic Sharia has great purposes and major principles, but this topic may be misused by some people as seen in the propositions of some so-called "intellectual elites" with modernist, rationalist, and contemporary orientations, who incessantly advocate the necessity of adhering to the objectives of the Sharia, its general principles, and the spirit of the Sharia. However, there is more to their speech than meets the eye! Their goal is to liberate themselves from complying with the denotations of the evidence, whether commands or prohibitions.

Proponents of this proposition impose a supposed contradiction between these grand legal objectives and the rulings of the legal evidence—which they consider subsidiary—and hence, consider the objectives and let those rulings fall.

This clarification is that some come to a concept imported from a foreign culture onto the Sharia, or a concept resulting from the pressure of the reality they live in, then they clothe it in the attire of objectives, and use it to strike at the meanings of the texts. Consider this in terms like "justice," "freedom," "equality"; for instance, someone might refer to a hadith in Bukhari (3017) where the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "Whoever changes his religion, kill him." They claim this hadith contradicts the spirit of the Sharia and one of its fundamentals, which is freedom. Hence, they argue to invalidate this ruling in favor of preserving the general objective (freedom).

Or they come to the verse: {Do not consume interest} *[Ali 'Imran: 130]* and say: from the objectives of the Sharia is to preserve people's wealth and promote its growth, therefore, let's disable the meaning of the verse to preserve the objectives of the Sharia!

Indeed, these people make following the evidence merely a means, not an end to be pursued. The end, in their view, is achieving the objectives they seek; by this means or another.

As for the truth in this matter, it is clarified by the following two principles:

**The first principle**: There is no conflict between the fundamentals of Sharia and its branches, nor between the legal objectives and its evidence.

The legal objectives are the summary of the Sharia's evidence, not a counterpart or an equal to them, how could this be! The legal objectives are but the culmination of a comprehensive view and complete induction of the detailed legal rulings, which led to the understanding of the general principles; hence, the structure cannot contradict its foundation.

In reality, the conflict arises between the legal evidence and desires that have been judged in the Sharia and clothed in its objectives—or its spirit—by discarding any opposing rulings.

**The second principle**: The greatest goal and purpose that a person strives for is to achieve guidance to the straight path, and there is no way to this except by complete and detailed following of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ; {And follow him that you may be guided} *[Al-A'raf:158]*.

**The eighth rule**: Speaking about Allah without knowledge is a great danger; Allah says: {And do not say about what your tongues assert of untruth, "This is lawful, and this is unlawful," to invent lies about Allah. Indeed, those who invent lies about Allah will not succeed. A brief enjoyment, and they will have a painful punishment} *[Al-Nahl: 116-117]*.

Therefore, before you delve into interpreting the Quran or explaining the hadiths: remember this well, and know that the revelation is not something trivial, it is something great, which requires caution and precaution, so one should not speak about it without knowledge.

Speak as you wish about economics, sports, or social issues..., and state your opinion and what you think is right, even if you err the matter is minor. However, the evidence of the Sharia is another matter; pause, be cautious, and beware; for speaking about Allah without knowledge is a great sin.

**The ninth rule**: Sharia is suitable for every time and place, and anyone who the evidence of the revelation reaches is obliged to follow it until the last day in this world, for the message is general for both humans and jinn: {And this Quran was revealed to me that I may warn you thereby and whomever it reaches} *[Al-An'am: 19]*, even 'Isa, peace be upon him,—who is the noble prophet and

messenger—if he descends in the last days, he will rule by this revelation of Muhammad.

Thus, He who revealed this revelation—Allah, exalted is He—knows what was and what will be, so there is no deviating from this revelation, and no one has the right to prefer anything over it, nor to limit its authority to a specific time or place.

Thus, the claim of the "historicity of evidence" and that they came to address social conditions in the past history—at the time of revelation—and that their validity has ended with the passing of that time: this claim is a misguided, heretical claim, denying the Quran and the Sunnah, and contradicting what is known of the religion by necessity.

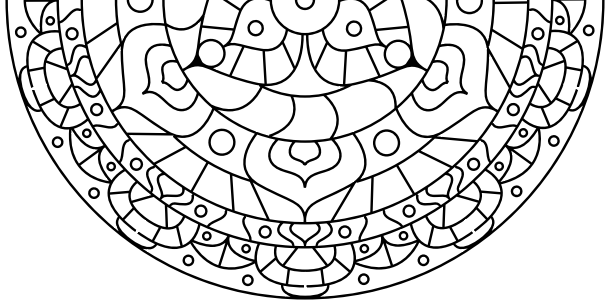
The tenth and final rule: Adhering to the correct revelation is the fruit of faith in the divinity of our Lord, exalted is He, and the prophethood of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Thus, this is a matter of great significance; it's either venerating the revelation, committing to it, and believing in its authority, or there is no faith!

The investigation into understanding the evidences and applying them must be viewed on this basis; either there is faith with commitment to the revelation, or there is no faith; {But no, by your Lord, they will not *[truly]* believe until they make you, *[O Muhammad]*, judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in *[full, willing]* submission} *[An-Nisa: 65]*.

## *For further benefit*

I hope that those seeking benefit and eager for more would look into a primer on the principles of jurisprudence. I recommend a small, delightful, and beneficial book by the esteemed Shaikh

Muhammad ibn Uthaymin, may Allah have mercy on him, titled "Al-Usul min 'Ilm al-Usul."



# Chapter Thirty-Four: How do we understand the legal evidence? (Part Two)

The previous chapter concluded before detailing the fundamental principles for understanding the Qur'an and Sunnah, and now is the time to articulate them, by the will of Allah.

The fundamental principles and rules governing the understanding of the Qur'an and Sunnah are numerous, and it is impossible to cover them all here; however, I will focus on four major principles, among the most important of these principles.

## First Principle: Evidence is Understood Only According to Rules in Usul al-Fiqh

"Usul al-Fiqh" (Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence) are the foundational rules for understanding the evidence of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and the laws governing the methodology of deduction from them and determining the stronger and weaker arguments.

"Usul al-Fiqh" is a noble Islamic science that establishes the scientific landmarks guarding the boundaries of Sharia; one should not delve into it without knowledge.

The literature of this science is abundant, and its topics are well-known, generally revolving around four discussions: evidence, prescriptive and situational rulings, the implications of words, and the discussion of ijtihad (independent reasoning), taqlid (following legal precedent), and issuing fatwas (religious rulings).

It is understood that Sharia cannot be correctly understood except through the principles of jurisprudence and rules of deduction, which are established and known among the Companions, the Successors, and their followers, until Imam al-Shafi'i came and compiled its foundations in his significant book: "Al-Risala". Subsequently, scholars have continued to adopt, compile, and elaborate on these principles, with examples including the principle that a command implies obligation, prohibition implies forbidding, the consideration is by the generality of the text not by the specificity of the cause, general statements are interpreted in light of specific ones, and the legal reality takes precedence over customary reality, etc.

## Second Principle: The understanding of the righteous predecessors is the measure of the correct understanding of religious evidence

Following the path of the righteous predecessors of this nation is a fundamental principle among us, the people of Islam. We speak as the righteous predecessors spoke, remain silent on what they remained silent, and understand the texts as they understood them.

The righteous predecessors are those who attained virtue by the consensus of the hadith: "The best people are those of my

generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them" *[Bukhari 2652, Muslim 2533]*. They are the Prophet's Companions and their followers, and the followers of their followers, who are the best of this nation. Those praised for following their path include: {And the first forerunners *[in the faith]* among the Muhajirin and the Ansar and those who followed them with good conduct—Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him} *[Al-Tawbah: 100]*, and the Prophet ﷺ said: "Hold to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly-guided caliphs. Hold onto it, and bite on it with your molar teeth" *[Ahmad 17145, Abu Dawud 4607]*.

Warnings have been issued against following any path other than that of the believers, with the righteous predecessors being the most entitled to the description of believers: {And whoever opposes the Messenger after guidance has become clear to him and follows other than the way of the believers—we will give him what he has taken and drive him into Hell} *[Al-Nisa: 115]*. Our Lord has commanded us to follow the path of those who turn to Him *[Luqman: 15]*, and after the Prophets, the most entitled to this description are the righteous predecessors.

As Allah commanded us to be with the truthful, Ad-Dahhak, may Allah have mercy on him, said in interpretation of the verse: {O you who believe, fear Allah and be with those who are true} *[Al-Tawbah:119]*, it refers to Abu Bakr, Umar, and their companions.

It becomes clear that the understanding of the predecessors is a criterion for knowing right from wrong; what conforms to their understanding is correct, and what contradicts it is incorrect. They are more knowledgeable than others about the Book and the Sunnah, more proficient in the Arabic language, and they are the greatest in piety and righteousness. The truth could not have been absent from them and then discovered by those who came after them. Ibn Kathir beautifully stated when interpreting

Allah's saying {And those who disbelieve say of those who believe, "If it had *[truly]* been good, they would not have preceded us to it."} *[Al-Ahqaf: 11]*: "As for the people of Sunnah and the community, they say about every act and statement not established from the Companions: it is an innovation; because if it were good, they would have preceded us to it, for they did not leave a good trait but hastened to it" (7/278).

This establishes that no one should invent meanings in the evidence that the predecessors did not recognize; thus, if someone, for example, goes to the Prophet's ﷺ grave and asks him for intercession based on the verse: {And if, when they wronged themselves, they had come to you, *[O Muhammad]*, and asked forgiveness of Allah and the Messenger had asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah Accepting of repentance and Merciful} *[Al-Nisa: 64]*; we would say: this reasoning is invalid; because the Companions and the Successors and their followers did not understand from the verse to come to his ﷺ grave after his death, but rather to come to him during his life.

## Third Principle: Sharia Evidence Can Only be Understood in the Light of the Arabic Language

This means that understanding Sharia is contingent upon understanding the language, which considers the words and context; Allah Almighty revealed His book in clear Arabic language, as He states: {Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an that you might understand} *[Yusuf: 2]*, and He said: {A Book whose verses have been detailed, an Arabic Qur'an for a people who know} *[Fussilat: 3]*. Thus, the revelation can only be understood and known through the Arabic language, and thus Mujahid, the distinguished Successor, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "It is not lawful for anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day to

speak about the Book of Allah unless he is knowledgeable of the languages of the Arabs."

Accordingly, no one should come to Allah's saying: {Then marry those that please you of *[other]* women, two or three or four} *[Al-Nisa: 3]* and misinterpret it to justify a man marrying nine women! As this is not an Arabic linguistic method to denote the number nine in this manner.

Thus, anyone who wants to understand the Qur'an and the Sunnah must know that they are understood through the Arabic language; that is, through knowing its ways of using words and structures, and understanding the implications of words at the time of revelation.

This cuts off the way for modernists who have made the revelation—Qur'an and Sunnah—open to every meaning, without decisiveness in any; open to interpretations and the generation of new meanings, to the extent that one of them said: "The reading I dream of *[he means reading the Qur'an]* is a reading so free that it wanders and loiters in all directions!" If only he kept his wandering and loitering away from the words of Almighty Allah! For his words have shown that these people are frivolous, not seekers of truth; and I wonder, would he accept if I applied this method to his words? Would he accept that I distort his words and attribute any meaning I desire to them, even if it is the opposite of what his words indicate? What absurdity is this!

## Fourth Principle: Evidence is not understood except by combining it with other evidence and considering it as a single text

That is, we do not take one part of it and ignore the rest; rather, we take all the texts and reconcile them; for there is no contradiction

between them; as their source is one {O you who believe, enter into Islam completely *[and perfectly]*} *[Al-Baqarah: 208]*, meaning enter into all aspects of Islam, not just some parts.

Thus, if someone says, for example: It is established in Sahih al-Bukhari (7435) that the Prophet ﷺ said: "You will see your Lord with your own eyes," meaning in the Hereafter, but the Qur'an denies this as it says: {Vision perceives Him not} *[al-An'am:103]*. If the two kinds of evidence conflict, we prioritize the Qur'an! The answer is that there is no conflict; affirmation is stated in one aspect and denial in another; affirmation of seeing and denial of encompassing. Reconciling the two evidence requires saying: Allah Almighty is seen but not encompassed, and encompassing is complete understanding; you see the sea but do not encompass it visually due to its vastness, and Allah is greater and more sublime.

## Examples of Misunderstandings of Evidence Due to Neglecting These Principles

### *First Example*

One of the gravely mistaken concepts in this era is attributing false freedom to Islam, where some claim that Islam allows freedom to move between religions as one desires, insisting you can commit to what you wish, abandon what you wish, and no blame is on you! They cling to this by distorting some of the Sharia evidence.

The most notable of these are three verses: The first is Allah Almighty's statement: {So whoever wills may believe and whoever wills may disbelieve} *[Al-Kahf: 29]*, the second is His statement: {There is no compulsion in religion} *[Al-Baqarah: 256]*, and the third is His statement: {For you is your religion, and for me is my religion} *[Al-Kafirun: 6]*.

If you consider the state of many of these individuals, you find that their problem is that they are psychologically defeated, hence they judge Islam according to Western thought, demanding it to dissolve into it, and that Muslims have no identity, and that its features and characteristics disappear. They want it to merely reflect others.

These individuals have made a significant mistake; Islam is the true religion sent down from Allah, superior to others, with its objectives, wisdoms, and rulings. It is not required to conform to other religions or societal norms. Those who believe in all its rulings will find happiness in this life and the hereafter, and those who disbelieve will harm only themselves and not Islam: {And let not those who hastily fall into disbelief grieve you; indeed, they will not harm Allah at all. Allah intends that He should give them no share in the Hereafter, and for them is a great punishment} *[Ali 'Imran: 176]*.

Whatever the case, all the evidence of the Sharia and the consensus of all Muslims have established that the only true religion accepted by Allah—after the prophetic mission—is Islam, as brought by our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: {And whoever desires other than Islam as religion—never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers} *[Ali 'Imran: 85]*. A person does not have the choice to enter, ignore, or leave it; rather, he is obliged to adhere to it and threatened with eternal damnation in fire if he turns away: {And whoever does not believe in Allah and His Messenger - indeed, We have prepared for the disbelievers a Blaze} *[Al-Fath: 13]*.

As for their citation of Allah Almighty's statement: {So whoever wills may believe and whoever wills may disbelieve} *[Al-Kahf: 29]*, it should be said: This verse is not offering a choice between belief and disbelief but is a form of threat and intimidation. It is a known

Arabic rhetorical style, and evidence that it is threatening is found in the following part of the verse: {Indeed, We have prepared for the wrongdoers a fire whose walls will surround them} *[Al-Kahf: 29]*. Therefore, it is a threat and warning to those who choose disbelief after the warning has come. It also demonstrates Allah's independence, meaning this is the truth from your Lord; if you believe, you do not benefit Allah with your belief, and if you disbelieve, you do not harm Him with your disbelief.

Regarding the statement {There is no compulsion in religion} *[Al-Baqarah: 256]*, this verse is sadly often distorted! This verse's "no" can either mean negation or prohibition; if it is negation, then it is Allah's statement that you have no power to coerce anyone into the religion because the beneficial religion is based on belief in the heart, and there is no way to force what is in the heart. If "no" is for prohibition, it means: No one is to be forced to enter Islam—if they pay the jizya while maintaining their faith, note this does not benefit them before Allah; if they die not following Islam, they are among the inhabitants of the fire, cursed by the Almighty.

In any case, the compulsion mentioned in this verse relates to entering the religion and not leaving it; apostasy is another matter. No scholar ever said this verse implies that a person has the choice to leave Islam whenever he wishes. Indeed, the text and consensus are that an apostate is given a chance to repent; if not, he is to be executed.

As for Allah Almighty's statement {For you is your religion, and for me is my religion} *[Al-Kafirun: 6]*, this is a statement of disavowal, not acknowledgment; it means: You have your misguided, corrupted religion, I disavow it and do not follow it, and I have my true religion sent down by Allah Almighty. Therefore, it is a statement of disavowal, not acknowledgment, and it means, like His statement in Surah Yunus: {And if they deny you, *[O Muhammad]*,

say, "For me are my deeds, and for you are your deeds. You are disavowed of what I do, and I am disavowed of what you do"} *[Yunus: 41]*.

Subhan Allah Almighty! How they are blind to the clear, decisive verses, then they confuse people with verses that they do not interpret correctly! And truly, ﷺ said: "When you see those who follow that which is not entirely clear, then those are the ones whom Allah has named *[as causing fitna]*, so beware of them" *[Hadith: Sahih Muslim 2665, Bukhari 4547]*.

## *Second Example*

The hadith about women being deficient in intelligence and religion. I don't think there is a hadith that has been more misunderstood and discussed in this era than this one, despite being clear to those who submit to Sharia and think well of it, and all praise is due to Allah.

Religion's enemies and some ignorant people claim: this hadith diminishes women and belittles their status. Following this, secularists attacked Islam, and others denied the authenticity of the hadith or misinterpreted it, either out of ignorance or because the West psychologically defeats them.

Whatever the case, the hadith is authentically reported in both Sahih collections (Bukhari 304 from Abu Sa'id, Muslim from Ibn Umar 79), agreed upon for its authenticity. The text, as in the hadith narrated by Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, goes: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out on the day of Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-Adha to the prayer ground, passed by the women and said: 'O women, give charity for I have seen that you form the majority of the people of Hell.' They asked, 'Why is that so, O Messenger of Allah?' He replied, 'You curse frequently, and

are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion who is more distracting to a man of wisdom than one of you.' They asked, 'What is deficient in our intelligence and religion, O Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'Is not the witness of two women equal to the witness of one man?' They replied in the affirmative. He said, 'This is the deficiency in her intelligence. Isn't it true that when she menstruates, she does not pray or fast?' They replied in the affirmative. He said, 'This is the deficiency in her religion.'"

This is the hadith, and the correct understanding of its meaning, and clarifying what is puzzling will be done in the following ten aspects by the will of Allah:

**Firstly**: The hadith has a specific context and should not be taken out of it, nor should it be exaggerated. The beginning of the hadith is explained by its end, and those who are hasty or deviant only consider the beginning without carefully considering the end. Thus, the explanation of the hadith is self-contained: The meaning of the deficiency in her intelligence is that the testimony of a woman is half that of a man, and the deficiency in her religion is that she does not pray or fast during her menstruation days. Thus, as the deficiency in her religion does not mean her moral failure or her weak fear of Allah; similarly, the deficiency in her intelligence is not about her ethical conduct but relates to her memory and concentration capacity, which is natural, just as her menstruation is natural.

The hadith, therefore, discusses a natural, not a moral, issue and does not accuse women of being unintelligent or incapable of understanding; listen to the prophetic clarification as narrated by Ibn Umar in Muslim, the Prophet ﷺ explained: "As for the deficiency in intelligence, it is because the testimony of two women is equivalent to that of one man; this is the deficiency in

intelligence. And they spend nights without praying and break their fast in Ramadan; this is the deficiency in religion." This explanation clarifies the deficiency in clear terms; where then did you understand the belittlement?

**Secondly**: The context clarifies that the hadith is far from any belittlement; the Prophet ﷺ mentioned the issue of deficiency as a prelude to his astonishment at the power of a woman's influence on a man despite her weak control and focus, and the man's strength and decisiveness. Where is the belittlement?

**Thirdly**: The meaning indicated by the hadith is not exclusive to the Sunnah but is supported by the Quran. Allah says: {And call to witness, from among your men, two witnesses. And if two men be not available, then a man and two women of such as you approve as witnesses, so that if one of the two errs, the other can remind her} *[Al-Baqarah: 282]*. The meaning of erring here refers to forgetting.

**Fourthly**: This hadith was spoken by the Prophet ﷺ in a gathering of women who questioned him about its meaning, asking: "What is deficient in our intelligence and religion?" It seems they were saying: This speech is strange to us; we know the law honors and values women; what does this speech mean? The Prophet ﷺ, being compassionate and merciful to his nation, clarified the meaning in the clearest terms, which were sufficient and healing.

The question is: What was the reaction of the noble Companions after hearing the explanation? Did they object or, at least, revise it? The answer is they accepted and submitted. Why? Because it was the truth, informing them of a reality they recognized in themselves.

**Fifthly**: The judgment in the hadith—as often happens in Sharia—is based on a predominant description, meaning most women are like this, and as mentioned before, it is related to a

natural characteristic associated with control and memory, and it does not imply any disparagement of women.

As for cleverness and intelligence, these are gifts that Allah bestows upon whomever He wills, whether men or women. Some women greatly surpass many men in intelligence; indeed, if you consider Khadija, Aisha, Fatima, Umm Salama, and their likes, may Allah be pleased with them, you will undoubtedly find them to be smarter and more sensible than many men—there is simply no comparison!

**Sixthly**: If I say, "Generally, women have weaker physiques and less muscle mass than men," does this belittle women? Definitely not. Similarly, if I say, "Men are generally more capable of controlling testimony and bearing its responsibility, especially in financial matters, due to their more frequent engagement in these matters," I am not belittling women. Also, if I say, "Women are gentler and more delicate than men," I am not belittling men. If I say, "A man's brain is larger and his focus more intense, and his visual capabilities are stronger, whereas a woman has stronger auditory capabilities, greater empathic skills, and deeper compassion and mercy," I am not disparaging either gender. The relationship between men and women is not one of rivalry but of complementarity.

Therefore, the true situation is that these are powers and talents, and Allah has given each group what suits and befits them. The beauty of a woman lies in her femininity, and the beauty of a man in his masculinity; thus, life is balanced. Men generally dominate with their rational thinking and calmness, while women prevail with their hearts and emotions. Praise be to Allah that it is so; otherwise, if a woman were equal to a man in terms of thinking, calculating consequences, and firmness: what would life taste like? How would our condition be if a mother, wife, daughter, and sister were like a man, not overwhelmed by emotion?

**Seventhly**: The reason for the testimony of two women being equated to one man in financial matters and similar issues is that women are generally more forgetful and less interested in these matters, and they also experience physical conditions that affect their focus and mood, such as menstruation, pregnancy, and breastfeeding. No sensible person disputes this, not to mention a fourth factor: women's emotional responsiveness and quick emotional reactions; all these factors affect their testimony in terms of bearing and delivering it, necessitating the strengthening of their testimony by another woman. People's rights must be cautiously protected and preserved.

**Eighthly**: It should be noted that equating the testimony of two women to that of one man does not belittle women because testimony is not a privilege or a right that is contested; rather, it is a duty, a burden, and a strain. Thus, alleviating this burden for women by having another woman support her in testimony is actually a consideration and kindness towards them.

**Ninthly**: If Sharia viewed women as unintelligent beings incapable of understanding, we would find this reflected clearly in its laws. But this is not the case; fundamentally, a woman is like a man, and women are counterparts of men, as stated in an authentic hadith *[Abu Dawud 236, Tirmidhi 113]*; they are like men in the original imposition of duties, in worship, commands, and prohibitions, in ownership and financial transactions, and in legal penalties and the hereafter rewards, except in specific situations necessitated by fair considerations, none of which involve disparaging or looking down upon women as some claim.

**Tenthly**: If Sharia were inclined to insult or degrade women, it would not accept their testimony at all. However, the reality is that it equates the testimony of two women to that of one man in certain situations. Moreover, it has accepted the sole testimony

of a woman in many legal matters known to jurists as matters typically known only to women, such as breastfeeding, childbirth, and women's specific issues. Jurists generally agree on accepting the testimony of one woman in these cases.

Thus, the entire matter considers the characteristics of men and women, what each excels at, while considering individual differences between them, preserving rights, and achieving benefits.

### *Example Three*

Misunderstandings also arose around the issue of wife-beating mentioned in the verse from the Quran: {And those *[wives]* from whom you fear arrogance - *[first]* advise them; *[then if they persist]*, forsake them in bed; and *[finally]*, strike them} *[Al-Nisa: 34]*. Here's a clarification of the correct understanding of this verse through the following points:

**Firstly**: When seeking the Islamic ruling on a particular issue, one should consider all evidence, not just isolate a single piece of evidence to highlight while ignoring others. Only by considering all evidence can one truly understand the issue. Thus, to understand this matter, one must first understand how Islam directs the relationship between husband and wife. What are the many directives that encourage kindness, benevolence, and honor towards the wife? If there is one verse about hitting, it is countered by dozens promoting kindness and benevolence.

It is unfair to ignore these numerous texts and focus solely on one verse, interpreting it in isolation. When all texts are considered together, the issue becomes clear.

**Secondly**: It is crucial to understand how Islam views the relationship between a husband and wife. Islam views it as a sublime relationship, a partnership in life, making them like one

soul in two bodies. Marriage in Islam is a social institution with the most significant function, where both parties have responsibilities: the husband leads, manages, and provides, while the wife takes on nurturing, organizing the home, and fostering happiness within it. For this institution to function optimally, the bond between the spouses must be extraordinarily strong: filled with love, compassion, and understanding.

However, disturbances can sometimes cloud this relationship; what then is the solution? Islam provides solutions for emergencies: if there is an issue from the man's side, there is a solution, and if it's from the woman's side, there is a remedy.

This verse from Surah An-Nisa deals with treatment if the disruption comes from the woman, and the man is given the means to address it. The remedy here is organized: {admonish them, separate from them in bed, and strike them} *[An-Nisa: 34]*.

Advice and reminders are the first step, and if the situation is not resolved, move to the second solution: separating in bed. If this does not resolve the issue, move to the third solution, which is striking! And here we come to the crux of the matter in response: a husband striking his wife!

**Thirdly**: Is striking the first solution? As previously mentioned: no, it is the last resort when the husband is at his wit's end, after all other treatments have been tried and have failed. Thus, it is essential not to overlook this fact: striking as treatment is the last resort, only to be used after exhausting all other solutions.

**Fourthly**: What is meant by 'striking'? When one hears of striking in this verse, it is not as some might imagine violent beating, breaking bones, shedding blood, or attacking the face and sensitive areas of the body. The Sunnah defines the limits of this striking as "not severe," meaning it is merely a gesture, a message

that chastises the soul rather than harms the body. Ata' said to Ibn Abbas, "What is non-severe striking?" He replied, "With a small stick like a tooth-cleaning stick!" *[Tafsir al-Tabari 6/712]*, indicating an exceptionally light touch. Al-Qurtubi in his exegesis (5/172) mentions, "It's like a poke or similar, because the intention is correction, nothing more."

Therefore, it is a compassionate, caring strike, not one from a vengeful tyrant. It is like a loving father's tap when his child errs. Is there any fault or issue with that?

**Fifthly**: What are the compelling reasons for striking? Understanding the previous points clarifies that the reason for resorting to striking is not any minor disagreement or slight negligence. Certainly, it must be a significant issue that necessitates this intervention after all other solutions have failed. When the very foundation of the major social institution (the family) is threatened with collapse, the leader of the institution cannot simply watch it crumble without acting. Reason and logic dictate that he must intervene with a type of force enveloped in love to restore stability to a family on the brink of disintegration.

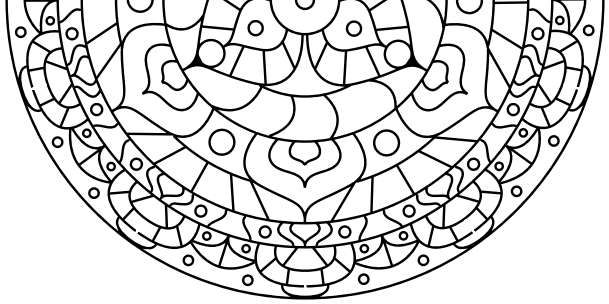
**Sixthly**: It's also crucial to understand that while the law has granted the husband the right to guide and discipline his wife within the aforementioned limits, it has also ensured the wife's right to choose her husband initially, and the right to annul the marriage contract—under its legal conditions—if she no longer wishes to continue with it. Thus, the wife is not compelled to remain with someone she cannot coexist with, and she has the legal right to seek separation if she chooses. Therefore, if the husband abuses his right, the wife has the option to reject him as a husband, as he does not deserve that role.

**Seventhly**: We must not forget that the verse that permitted the use of striking as a treatment is the same verse that warned husbands against injustice and crossing the limits: {But if they obey you *[once more]*, seek no means against them. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted and Grand} *[Al-Nisa: 34]*. Beware of injustice; Allah is Exalted and Great, capable of avenging any wrongs done.

## For further reading

I recommend three books that you can refer to for understanding both the clear and the complex evidence in Sharia:

1. Tafsir Ibn Kathir by Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him.
2. Tafsir Al-Sa'di by Al-Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him.
3. Explanation of Riyad as-Salihin by Shaikh Ibn Uthaymin, may Allah have mercy on him.



# Chapter Thirty-Five: Philosophy of Energy Under Scrutiny

We face a significant tribulation that has fascinated some people, who mistook it for fresh water to quench their thirst, yet it is nothing but a mirage with no reality. It dresses in the guise of science, but it is nothing but pseudoscience, with enticing labels such as self-development and human development, which upon closer examination, turn out to be nothing but pagan rituals and a wide gateway for the entry of poisonous ideas.

This is the philosophy of energy, its sciences, and its various applications.

A wise person does not hastily reject something without proper knowledge and seeks unambiguous evidence.

We need to shed light on this topic because there is confusion among those who do not grasp what lies behind the shiny headlines.

Moreover, because the popularity of this philosophy promotes a creedal thought foreign to the doctrine of Islam.

We need to discuss this topic because monotheism is the core matter and the most crucial issue, and protecting its sanctity is a paramount duty. The philosophy of energy disturbs its purity and may fundamentally undermine it.

We need to talk about this subject so that the unaware realize that pagan beliefs have not died; they still exist under new masks, and monotheism, if not constantly reminded and taught, is forgotten; thus, heresies quickly infiltrate it, and this topic is a true testament.

Before I elaborate, I present four important preliminary points:

1. Reason dictates that the new should not be rejected just because it is new, nor should it be accepted just because it is new. Among the wise, it is improper to reflexively reject a new idea or to accept it without solid scientific backing.

   Thus, the rule here is: Rejecting the new just because it is new is following whims, and accepting the new just because it is new is also following whims.

   The obligation is to accept the truth because it is the truth, and to reject falsehood because it is falsehood, regardless of our desires and whims, as Allah Almighty says: {O you who believe, stand firm in justice, witnesses for Allah} *[Al-Nisa: 135]*.

2. Not everything dressed as science is correct science.

   It is necessary to distinguish between correct sciences and pseudoscience, and not distinguishing between them is a significant problem, and the reference should be the trusted experts in each field; medicine has its experts, physics has its experts, and Islamic jurisprudence has its experts.

   When the boundaries between the correct and pseudoscience are blurred, superstitions and deceptive lies emerge.

3. Experimenting with something once or twice and then

experiencing a favorable effect is not conclusive evidence of its validity; it might be coincidental, and the experimented item might not be the cause. There could be another overlooked factor.

Proving the validity of a particular practice has its known methods; it is either known through prophetic revelation from the trustworthy Prophet ﷺ or through repeated empirical experience by experts, and the positive results of credible scientific means of proof. Merely saying, "I tried and benefited," and "Someone tried and benefited," is not a scientific proof to build upon.

4. Our discussion here is about the philosophy of energy, its applications, and its branches, despite the varied names: from healing courses to energy healing to Reiki to the law of attraction to unleashing your inner genie, and more that involve energy concepts and philosophies. However, courses unrelated to this, like time management, planning, public speaking, etc., are not our focus here; I mention this to avoid confusion.

## Energy Philosophy and Its Domains

It is a system of beliefs and rituals derived from esoteric Eastern pagan philosophies, centered around the belief in incarnation, the unity of existence, and the deification of humans, claiming to achieve energy balance for the soul and unity with the cosmic or absolute spirit. It has various applications related to healing, happiness, attracting desires, and more, encompassing practices and laws like Reiki, the law of attraction, chakra philosophy, yoga, karma, etc., as previously mentioned.

These philosophies, as noted, originate from Eastern sources: Chinese and Indian, then found popularity in the West due to prevailing materialism and spiritual drought, making them

desperate for anything that might moisten their arid hearts. Truthfully, they only wandered further astray.

These pseudosciences then infiltrated the Islamic world, attracting many young men and women, despite our self-sufficiency with our creed and Sharia; however, the deception is significant, and imitation and curiosity do their part, especially when presented under attractive banners like human development, self-improvement, achieving happiness, attaining healing, attracting wealth, accompanied by certificates and the allure of being "certified trainers."

The proponents of this philosophy spread it mainly through four methods: conducting courses, authoring books, holding lectures, and offering consultations.

Their approach relies on using scientific terms out of context, falsifying scientific experiments, and building on the slightest resemblances. They also adopt a gradual approach; they do not disclose everything initially or at the lower levels of courses; what is mentioned at the start is generally acceptable, but the truths unfold at higher levels, and upon gaining trust in the learner. In stories from those who have recanted and lifted the veil on what they have seen and heard, there is a lesson, and those who seek it will find it published online.

## Religious Violations in Energy Philosophy

This paragraph is the most crucial in our topic, and it is the main reason for its discussion; had there not been violations in energy sciences that affect the Muslim's creed, there would be no need to speak about them.

Before explaining them, I highlight two points:

**The first point**: The creedal dangers, some of which I will mention with Allah's help, will become clear to you if you research the roots of these sciences and their backgrounds, which are Eastern religions or what the West has derived from them. If you look at what the West presents in their courses, books, and lectures, they are more explicit and clear, unlike those in Muslim countries; they might practice some form of dissimulation, not fully disclosing or clarifying to people all that it entails, sometimes draping their presentation with some mention of Allah or loosely connecting it to a legal concept, which does not advance or delay anything; the clear truth cannot be hidden behind this facade; the religion of Muhammad ﷺ and these modern charlatanries are opposites that do not coexist.

**The second point**: I am here to point out errors in existing applications, regardless of the intent or knowledge of those practicing them; some of them might be deluded or ignorant of the truth.

Now, I say: The religious violations in the philosophy of energy and its applications are numerous and serious, and I will list some of them by the will of Allah:

**Firstly**: The deification of humans!

One of the greatest violations of energy philosophy and its related aspects is the foundation for the deification of humans.

Yes: deifying humans, either explicitly or implicitly; the pagan beliefs from which this philosophy springs are based on the premise that humans contain a divine spark; thus, they are in control of their fates and capable of shaping them as they wish.

If you look at their courses and books, you find a clear glorification of human beings; they talk about them as they talk

about the creator of the universe, who manages it at will; you are the one who makes yourself happy or miserable, you are the one who denies or grants, and you are the one who paints your fate with your own consciousness, your willpower is invincible, and your subconscious mind responds to you and fulfills your needs! You need nothing more than to awaken the giant within you!

Consider some of their statements - and I seek forgiveness from Allah for quoting them, but it is necessary for clarification:

One of them says, "You have absolute power and boundless wisdom, and infinite intelligence... You have the capabilities of Allah and His power to create your world."

Another says, "We must discover within ourselves that there is a god."

A third says, "You who seek Allah externally: that which you seek is you!"

A fourth says, "We are disguised gods!"

And a fifth says, "You are the system that created all the reality in the universe... You need nothing; you are the one who makes things happen by your will!" Then he says, "You are perfect, and your role is to give from your perfection to the entire universe!"

If space allowed, I could quote ten or twenty more statements, and no, by Allah, this is not the talk of obscure individuals but rather the words of their leading figures.

It is disgraceful for a weak creature, whose beginning is a sperm and end a corpse, and within whose body lie urine and feces, to boast such ugly talk.

As for the people of Islam, they say: O Allah, You are our Lord and we are Your slaves, Your decree runs through us, Your judgment

upon us is just, we possess neither benefit nor harm for ourselves, we control nothing, not even an atom's weight; all of us are hungry except those You feed, naked except those You clothe, and astray except those You guide. What You will happens, even if we do not wish it, and what we wish does not happen if You do not will it, and there is no power or strength except through You.

**Secondly** - and this is related to the first point, as they are intertwined issues - the pseudo-sciences of energy espouse a heretical creed, specifically the concepts of indwelling, union, and monism. They oscillate among these beliefs, floundering in their darkness. This means that Allah - exalted be He - is believed to indwell or merge with His creations, or that the Creator and the creation become one, or that Allah essentially is everything in existence. Our exalted Lord is far above such notions.

The undeniable truth for any Muslim is that Allah is transcendent above His creation and distinct from it; anyone who says otherwise contradicts the Quran and the Sunnah.

This creed, which I refer to, is rooted in Eastern religions such as Taoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, which are undoubtedly the origins of energy philosophy. Generally, they all agree on the belief in monism and that there is a divine spark or essence within the human being.

Energy, in all its applications and healing practices - from Reiki, Prana, Qi Gong, Tai Chi, Feng Shui, and others - is considered, in their view, to be energy emanating from the singular whole from which the universe originated and to which it will return, possessing its force and effect, whether called energy, vital energy, life energy, cosmic energy, spiritual energy, or referred to as the force of life, healing power, consciousness, or the universal existence. According to them, this energy is a god or part of god, indwelling in or

merging with creations, and practitioners of these superstitions strive to connect with it; because it is what grants and withholds, heals and harms, and brings happiness and misery. Thus, they extend their hands to let this energy enter them, practice breathing exercises to allow it to flow through their body pathways or sit in meditation with closed eyes and repeat specific words to transcend their consciousness and achieve what they call a higher perception, i.e., union with the Creator.

They claim to practice these rituals to restore the energetic balance in the body; that is, to harmonize with the universe and thus unite with it, giving a person the power to heal themselves and others, and to control all that happens to and by them.

In short: Connecting with this energy means uniting with the absolute (god), and thus returning to the divine origin, elevating to the divinity of the self; humans, in their view, are forgotten gods, having detached from their divine reality. If they regain that lost energy, they approach their truth and then control reality.

**Thirdly**: Falling into major shirk (polytheism); this applies to those who believe that they, their subconscious minds, nature, or energy share with Allah in creation or governance, a frequent notion in their applications.

**Fourthly**: Proponents of energy healing and the law of attraction have gone as far as to circulate modern amulets to attract cosmic energy, from gemstones and Hindu and Buddhist symbols that supposedly bring happiness and well-being, according to their claims. There are stones that bring happiness, statues that attract a life partner, metallic disks that draw wealth, and bracelets, necklaces, and earrings that supposedly increase positive energy and repel negative energy around you. However, the Prophet

Muhammad ﷺ said, "Amulets, charms, and love potions are forms of idolatry" Reported by Ahmad (3615).

**Fifthly**: One of the detriments of these false sciences is that they weaken reliance on Allah, trust in Him, love for Him, hope in Him, and fear of Him, as a person under the influence of these false sciences may become self-sufficient without Allah - Allah forbid - and gradually their heart may detach from the realities of servitude until they may completely break away from it.

**Sixthly**: Excluding belief in fate; this is an inevitable consequence of this philosophy. If you are the one who creates your destiny and controls your life, then there is no need to believe in fate!

Besides other numerous deviations related to belief in angels, the unseen, the Hereafter, the soul, taking means, and more, which require more space to elaborate on.

In summary: I can describe this philosophy as a collection of misguidances and modern sorcery.

In other words, it is pagan sorcery in modern molds, infused with Western atheism, with no scientific backing, merely selling illusions and stealing people's money.

## Doubt and Its Response

Proponents of energy claim that what is meant by energy, attracting it, and connecting with it is merely attracting positive energy and repelling negative energy! Yes, this is what they state, and claims are easy to make, but the real issue is whether what is mentioned is true or not!

In physics, there is no such thing as positive energy and negative energy! This concept that they have sensationalized is merely an

illusion with no basis in reality! Energy is a singular concept, defined as the capacity to perform a specific task or the ability to work.

When they talk about energy, they are not discussing the recognized form of energy that exists and can be measured—like thermal, electromagnetic, or kinetic energy. Instead, they talk about something that exists only in their imaginations!

They say your body attracts vibrations or charges! Where do they get this? Physically, the body is charge-neutral and does not possess an attractive energy, and vibrations are positive frequencies that explain the elasticity of bodies and do not possess an attractive property.

They have linked the concentration of energy with healing or attraction, and this is scientific charlatanism.

They have troubled the world with the law of attraction; they say a person attracts what he thinks about because when he focuses on his thoughts, he creates energy, and this energy attracts what he wants to happen; that is, the particles of the universe are affected by human thought due to energy! Thus, thought creates reality, and through your focus and meditation, you can change the universe around you! That is, if you think something should move to the right, it will move to the right, and if you think it should move to the left, it will move to the left! Even surgical operations can supposedly be performed through thoughts alone!

This is not a joke! These are things written in widely distributed books and said in paid courses.

I repeat energy does not attract, and frequencies do not attract, and what the proponents of the law of attraction and energy science mention is false and even laughable to specialists.

Unfortunately, they deceive by saying, for example, there is an energy field around the human body, and its size and color change according to a person's mental and physical health, and it can also predict the likelihood of future diseases. They claim this has been proven and photographed!

In reality—as physicists have clarified—the so-called energy aura they claim to photograph is nothing but an electrical discharge of the surrounding medium of the photographed body, and the shape and color are merely the result of pure physical factors related to the body's environment, which can be manipulated and controlled.

Thus, these people are engulfed in a big illusion or a great lie!

And they might say: but there remains a possibility... perhaps their words are true! The response: We are facing a complete system of assertions unsupported by evidence, indeed, contradicting established science; where does the possibility come from?

Moreover, forget this and tell me: How did you, the speaker, know about positive and negative energy, vibrations, and attraction? Did you see this yourself? Have you conducted a scientific experiment that meets scientific standards? The answer is certainly no; then nothing remains except that this trainer or that book informed you, and you believed it; well, the existence of energy and its interactions, as mentioned, are either a matter of the unseen or a sensory matter; if it's unseen: you are Muslim, and you know that the unseen belongs to Allah, as He says: {Say: "The unseen belongs to Allah alone"} *[Yunus: 20]*. There is no way to know it except through revelation, and these superstitions are not part of the revelation! Thus, what remains is that it is a sensory matter; and sensory matters are either observed or measured and known to exist by known scientific measures, and your energy cannot be measured; thus, it remains nothing but pseudo-science!

Add to this another point: Have you ever wondered why there isn't a single reputable scientific university or research center that recognizes this type of energy science? Look at physicists and physics departments, doctors and medical departments in well-known universities both in our countries and abroad. Ask them: Is there such a thing as energy and attraction as you mention? Have you seen any trustworthy doctors who say that healing can be achieved through positive energy and the power of intention?! Isn't this a clear indicator that what these people are on is baseless, but rather like plowing in water?

Then also consider: These people say that you can attract anything to you, and by focusing your intention, you can achieve all that you aspire to, and with your subconscious mind, you can attain anything! Why not ask those who propose these falsehoods: Why do you charge substantial amounts for the courses and books you publish? Why not make them free and achieve your expected gains with your intention and energy! Soon you will find it by merely thinking deeply focused on your accounts; this is what you assert!

Why do you profit from the pockets of the youth when you could profit through attraction, intention, and energy?!

And another more important matter: If it is possible to attract anything and achieve every goal with the power of determination, the power of the self, through attraction, and with the genie between the ribs: we would like to draw your attention to the fact that there are poor people and famines and wars in the world, and there is inflation and many economic, political, and social problems, and there are epidemics and diseases that poor countries groan under; and you are the most capable people to control energy and direct vibrations to eliminate these negatives! Where are you in providing help and solving problems; are you busy conducting courses and

authoring books, leaving the world to groan under these dilemmas, although you have the magical solution—as you say?!

If only the deceived would awaken.

Someone might say: These courses are offered by specialized doctors and holders of higher degrees in their fields!

What do you think, dear reader, if I write the word "Master's" and "Ph.D." in bold on a piece of paper, then sign and stamp it; would you buy the two papers from me for a thousand riyals?! Is there anyone who respects themselves who would accept it and then imbue themselves with what they have not been given and say: I am Dr. So-and-so!

How easy it is to buy a Ph.D. today, and the internet is full of sellers of this illusion; but what is the scientific value of higher degrees that are not recognized?

Take this: One of the biggest promoters of these fallacies in the Arab world introduces himself as Dr. So-and-so, having earned a Ph.D. from such a university in the United States!

I and others have entered the website of this university; we found it to be merely an institute that adopts these pseudosciences, and grants master's and Ph.D. degrees by correspondence within a year and a few months, but this so-called university is not recognized by any official body in America, and they themselves have stated this on their site! Then comes someone who deceives the gullible by being a doctor! What kind of absurdity is this?

Even if we assumed that some of those who present these fallacies have obtained a higher degree from a recognized university, you would find their degree is in another field and not in energy; because clearly, there is no recognized university that grants a degree in these pseudosciences.

## Another Doubt and Its Answer

Proponents of energy say that the concept of attracting energy and connecting with it... etc., is merely about attracting positive energy and repelling negative energy! Yes, this is what they claim, and claims are easy to make, but the question remains whether what is mentioned is true or not!

In physics, there is no such thing as positive energy and negative energy! This concept, which they have so heavily emphasized, is a mere illusion with no reality! Energy is one thing, defined as the ability to perform a specific work, or the ability to act.

When they talk about energy, they are not talking about the known energy that exists and can be measured—like thermal, electromagnetic, or kinetic energy—but about something that exists only in their minds!

They say: Your body attracts vibrations or charges! Where did they get this? Physically, the body is charge-neutral and does not have an attractive energy, and vibrations are positive frequencies that explain the elasticity present in bodies and do not possess attractive properties.

They have linked the focus of energy to healing or attraction, and this is scientific charlatanism.

They have drilled into the world's head the law of attraction; they say: A person attracts whatever they want through thinking about it; because when one focuses on what they are thinking about, they form energy, and this energy attracts what they want to happen; that is, the particles of the universe are affected by a person's thinking due to the energy! Thus, thought creates reality, and your focus and contemplation can change the universe around you! That is, if you think something should move right, it will move

right, and if you think it should move left, it will move left! Even surgical operations could be conducted through thoughts alone!

This is not a joke! This is something written in widespread books and said in courses where money is paid.

I repeat: Energy does not attract, frequencies do not attract, and what the proponents of the law of attraction and energy science claim is false, even laughable to specialists.

Unfortunately, they confuse matters; they say, for example, there is an energy surrounding the human body, and its size and color change according to the person's mental and physical health, and it can even predict future illnesses! They claimed this has been proven and captured in images!

Reality—as physicists have clarified—is that the so-called energy aura they claim to have photographed is just electrical discharge from the environment around the photographed body, and the shape and color are merely the result of pure physical factors related to the body's surroundings, which can be manipulated and controlled.

Thus, these people are deep in a grand illusion or a great lie!

They might still say: But there remains a possibility... maybe their words are true!

The answer is: We are facing a complete system of assertions unsupported by evidence, but rather, it clashes with established science; where then does the possibility come from?!

Furthermore, forget all that and tell me: How did you, the speaker, learn about positive and negative energies, vibrations, and attraction? Have you seen this yourself? Have you conducted a scientific experiment that meets scientific standards? The answer is

definitely no; so, all that remains is that this trainer or that book told you, and you believed it; well, the existence of energy and its interactions as mentioned is either a matter of the unseen or a sensory matter; if it's unseen, you're a Muslim, and you know the unseen belongs to Allah, He said: {Say, "The unseen belongs only to Allah."}, and there is no way to know it except through revelation, and there is nothing in the revelations about these absurdities! So, it remains a sensory matter; and sensory matters are either observed or measured and known to exist through established scientific measures, and your energy cannot be measured; so, it remains nothing but pseudoscience!

What is the alternative to these false sciences?

The alternative is to believe monotheism, the oneness of Allah in His lordship, divinity, names, and attributes.

The alternative is to glorify Allah and truly serve Him, and to genuinely follow His Prophet ﷺ.

The alternative is for Allah and His Messenger ﷺ to be dearer to you than anything else, to truly rely on Him, to detach from relying on your own power and strength, and to hope in Allah and fear Him.

The alternative is to act according to what the Prophet ﷺ said in a hadith reported in Muslim (2664): "The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer, while there is good in both. Strive for what benefits you, seek help from Allah, and do not give up. If something befalls you, do not say, 'If only I had done this or that' but rather say 'Allah has decreed and what He wills, He does.' Indeed, saying 'If' opens the door to the work of Satan." Ponder it thoroughly and make it your constitution; each sentence in it refutes a pillar of the alleged science of energy.

The alternative lies in exerting effort, hard work, avoiding laziness, and not relying on mere wishes.

The alternative is in realizing faith in divine decree, with Allah's knowledge and writing, by His will and creation.

The alternative is in using legitimate spiritual remedies and permissible medical treatments.

The alternative is to beware of the advocates of evil and sellers of illusion.

The alternative is to seek correct knowledge from its rightful sources.

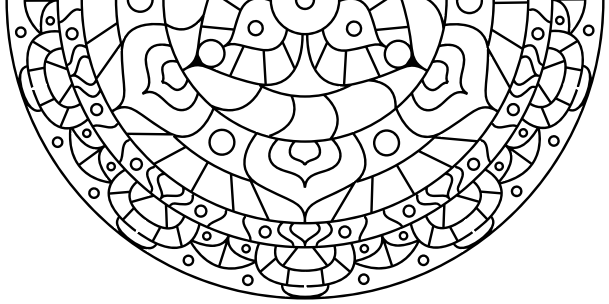
The alternative is in awareness and not swaying with every wind.

The alternative is in taking pride in our religion, heritage, and values.

The alternative is in sincere repentance and striving in supplication to Allah. And Allah knows best.

*For further benefit*

I recommend a book called: "al-Tatbiqat al-Mu'asarah li Falsafat al-Istishfa al-Sharqiyyah," published by the Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine.



# Chapter Thirty-Six: Pitfalls in Thinking

We live in a noisy era, filled with opinions, beliefs, disagreements, and debates. Without proper thinking and a sound methodology for dealing with this vast intellectual influx, how can one discern right from wrong? How can one reach a safe shore away from the overwhelming currents of deviation?

Consider something closely related to people's daily lives today: it seems we agree that social media has become a daily necessity for both the young and old, and it significantly drives the wheel of ideas. Most social media platforms are hotspots for ongoing discussions around the clock, serving as arenas for the expression and solicitation of opinions.

In the face of this intellectual glut, Muslims need to possess maturity and awareness to avoid harmful mental parasites, especially since the pitfalls that undermine thinking are widespread; such as judging without evidence, assuming non-evidentiary things as valid evidence, being deceived by the embellishment of speech, following logical fallacies, or succumbing to blind imitation, among others. Along with this, the discerning individual needs to be armed with the principles of correct thinking derived from the

light of revelation; so that his presentation, acceptance, or rejection of ideas is based on a sound foundation.

The previous chapters have sprinkled much about the correct principles of thinking or its pitfalls, and this chapter summarizes and adds to those discussions.

## Logical Fallacies

Logical fallacies are common patterns of false arguments that appear as valid arguments.

A logical fallacy is a deceptive argument that does not respect the scientific method.

It is predominantly used to deceive the interlocutor and obscure the truth, or to escape from being held accountable.

This topic has been touched upon in previous chapters, and it is appropriate to refer to it in this chapter; it is closely related to its subject.

There are many fallacies, and I will mention eight famous ones:

### *1- The fallacy of emotional argument, or appealing to emotions:*

This is when someone uses emotion and plays with feelings during their reasoning to influence the judgment of the other party.

It is not required that we detach from our emotions, nor is it appropriate to place emotion in the position of argument, because it does not stand as an argument or a basis for belief.

Example: Someone makes a wrong statement, and if discussed about it, they say: "You don't know how much time I spent preparing, how much I toiled and how many nights I stayed up!"

This is a fallacy; emotions should not be used as an argument.

It is noted that this fallacious approach is adopted by extremists; they may sway the naive with emotional fallacies; so be wary.

### *2- The Fallacy of Changing the Subject (Red Herring Fallacy)*

This is when a person, unable to confront an argument with another argument, introduces other topics unrelated to the discussion to distract the other party and save themselves from revealing their weakness.

Thus, it is a form of evasion, and it would be more appropriate to discuss with evidence or to admit error or inability.

Example: Someone is advised about a mistake they made; they respond by saying: "Instead of advising me, look at what your relative is doing!" Or they say: "And you do such and such!" This is a clear evasion, as the two issues are separate, and just because someone else made a bigger mistake does not make your mistake correct!

### *3- The Fallacy of Circular Reasoning (Begging the Question)*

This means making the conclusion the premise that is argued upon; here, the fallacy does not add anything to the conclusion except to rephrase the premise with some manipulation of words, i.e., their reasoning "goes in circles" around the conclusion, as the poet says: As if we and the water around us are people sitting around water!

Example: An advocate of the theory of evolution says: "The theory of evolution is correct." If asked: "What's the evidence?" They reply: "Because it's a fact!"

With the slightest reflection, you find that there is no real difference between 'correct' and 'fact'; it's as if they said: "It's correct because it's correct!"

### *4- The Fallacy of Distortion (Straw Man Fallacy)*

This involves someone deliberately misrepresenting their opponent's statement or argument by connecting it to outcomes or ideas that the original statement does not assert or necessitate. The intent is often to embarrass the opponent with this unethical tactic due to a lack of a valid argument.

For example, an advisor might say: "We need to monitor our children's behavior and their internet usage," to which the opponent responds: "So, you are accusing them of poor morals, or you don't trust them, or you want to suffocate them!"

This is a fallacy because there is no necessary correlation between monitoring and accusing, or monitoring and suffocating.

Another example: An advisor might say, "We need to adhere to our religious laws and good customs," and someone responds: "So, you want us to live in darkness and return to the Middle Ages!"

This is a fallacy far from the truth; the advisor's statement does not necessitate what was claimed.

### *5- The Fallacy of Hasty Generalization*

This occurs when someone notices something about another person and then makes a broad generalization that includes everyone who shares a certain characteristic with that person.

In other words, making a mountain out of a molehill!

Anyone who issues broad general judgments without verifying their applicability to most of those described should be disregarded for their level of thinking!

Unfortunately, this error is frequently heard; you might find that someone had a negative experience with a person of a certain nationality and then generalizes that experience to the entire country: "People from country X are all like this!" How many have you met to make such a fair judgment; or because of one person's mistake, you brand the entire country's people with this description?

Or perhaps he meets someone who appears devout who does not smile at him, then he concludes: "Religious people are harsh!"

Or an imam is late to start a prayer by two minutes, and he generalizes: "Imams are not punctual!"

Justice requires putting things in their proper place, and hasty generalization contradicts this.

### *6- The Fallacy of Personal Attack (Ad Hominem).*

This occurs when someone leaves the task of countering their interlocutor's argument with a stronger one and instead attacks their character, using this attack as sufficient proof to dismiss the other's statements.

This is a sign of weak knowledge and a lack of substantive argument; for example, two people might be discussing the theory of evolution, and one criticizes the theory for its flaws. The other responds: "Your attack on the theory shows your limited thinking, and I didn't think you were so academically shallow!" They believe they have triumphed over their opponent!

Notice that this speaker has shifted from a scientific discussion to insulting his opponent, who could respond: "The discussion is about the theory, not about my intellect; address my argument, not me!"

### *7- The Fallacy of False Dichotomy.*

This occurs when some people impose only two options as the only possibilities, without having considered all possible outcomes.

Often, this is done by those who want to influence the uninformed and coerce them into agreeing with them in an indirect manner.

For example, someone might say: "If you are not liberal, then you are a rigid, dogmatic extremist!"

Why? Can't I be neither? Can't I be a well-mannered, moderate Muslim?

### *8- The Fallacy of False Cause.*

This fallacy occurs when correlation is mistaken for causation. Just because two events occur together does not mean one caused the other.

It is similar to the fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc, which means "after this, therefore because of this." There is no necessary link between the two; for instance, just because the rooster crows before dawn does not cause the sunrise.

Causation requires more than just sequence; due to ignorance and lack of scrutiny, people might incorrectly link two events causally. For instance, it was reported that residents of a certain area developed smallpox after they first saw a camel, leading them to believe that seeing a camel causes the disease.

Similarly, it was said that a man died soon after people in his community started practicing pottery, so everyone stopped practicing pottery, believing it caused death.

These examples help us understand claims we hear about some people who practiced certain energy rituals — as detailed in the previous chapter — and felt relief, or wore an amulet and then felt more energetic, or consulted an astrologer or checked their horoscope and then experienced something positive; all these occurrences were coincidental, not causative.

In summary: There are many phenomena that may seem connected to those in a hurry to attribute causation, but in reality, the link between them is non-existent.

## General Rules and Guidelines to Protect Against Fallacies in Thinking.

These are twenty concise rules and guidelines:

1. Judging something is a derivative of understanding it.

   Do not rush to judge something until you have a clear understanding of it.

2. In matters of dispute, the truth is singular; it is grasped by those who reach it and missed by those who do not.

   Strive to find it; as for the idea that truth is relative, it contradicts itself.

3. Beautifying the phrase or polishing the words, or insulting and cursing, does not establish truth nor negate falsehood.

   Focus your mind on the argument and ignore everything else.

4. The signs of truth and its proofs cooperate and support each other; they do not contradict or conflict.

Contradiction indicates falseness, and nothing is free from contradiction except what comes from Allah.

5. The value of truth lies in its essence, not in who speaks it, and it should be accepted regardless of who says it.

   Truth takes precedence over creation; it is by truth that men are known, not the other way around.

   Truth is above personalities; hence, "Whoever brings you the truth, accept it from him, even if he is distant and disliked, and whoever brings you falsehood, reject it, even if he is dear and close.[16]"

6. There is hardly a false statement that does not contain some truth; so, do not be deceived by it.

   Scholars say: Falsehood does not spread among people unless it is adorned with some truth; therefore, the people of disbelief and innovation of all kinds have mixed truth with falsehood, and because of the little truth with them, the temptation by them has been magnified; they mislead many people away from the pure truth that must be believed in, and they lean them towards the great falsehood that they are on; thus, one should not beautify a statement that is predominantly false because it contains a little truth.

7. There is no discussion regarding axioms and rational necessities.

   These are primary rational knowledge, that is, those that are inherently present in the mind; like the principle of causality and the impossibility of the coexistence of contradictions and

(16) This was narrated from Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him, as recorded by Abu Na'im in Hilyat al-Awliya' (1/134), and a similar narration was reported from Ubay bin Ka'b, may Allah be pleased with him, also in Hilyat al-Awliya' (9/121).

their resolution; thus, no proof is established for them, nor is debate accepted, nor does anyone debate them except one who is impaired in his reasoning.

8. If you narrate something, then be accurate, and if you claim something, then bring proof.

   Do not bring or accept any narration -any transmission- without verifying its accuracy, and do not bring or accept a claim without evidence that must be resorted to.

9. The point is not the argumentation but the accuracy of the argumentation.

   Thus, not everyone who provides an argument is correct.

   Do not be deceived just because someone has presented an argument; no one is without an argument even if he is a misguided falsifier; the point is in the accuracy of the argument, not merely its presentation, even if it is embellished.

10. Many times, a true word is intended to propagate falsehood; be cautious and perceptive.

    It may be that the wording is correct, but the meaning intended by the speaker is false, and his intention behind it is malicious; as Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, said to those among the Kharijites who declared, "Judgement belongs only to Allah," so he said: "A true word intended to propagate falsehood" *[Sahih Muslim 1066]*.

11. The majority is not proof of correctness.

    That is, the prevalence of a statement and the number of its supporters do not necessarily imply its correctness; falsehood may spread, and truth may become strange; do not be deceived; the merit is in the correct argument, not in the minority or majority.

Verify and scrutinize, weigh with the correct balance, and beware of the wrong source.

Do not be a prisoner to rumors, nor a follower behind mob authority, nor absorb every opinion as if you were a sponge.

Do not be like one gathering firewood at night; carrying a bundle of wood that might be intermingled with a snake.

12. The mind is limited, so do not burden it with what it cannot bear.

Applying it appropriately is wise, and overburdening it is foolishness and abandonment.

13. The absence of a specific proof does not imply the absence of the thing proven; it may be proven by another proof.

That is, if one proof is nullified, it does not necessitate the non-existence of the thing intended to be proven, because it may be proven by other evidence besides that proof.

Thus, the absence of a specific, particular proof does not imply the absence of the thing proven; for example, the rising of the sun is established by several proofs; like observation, light, and heat, so if the proof of observation and light is absent for the blind, for example, it does not necessitate that it does not rise, because there is still the proof of heat.

If an atheist says, "We have not seen Allah," it can be replied: If observation is a proof of the existence of something, then not observing it does not prove its non-existence; it may be established by another proof like its effects; thus, we have not seen Allah, but we know of His existence through other proofs like His creations and His signs.

14. Simple ignorance is better than compounded ignorance.

Simple ignorance is merely the lack of knowledge without being tainted by the opposite.

Compounded ignorance, however, is not knowing the truth while believing its opposite, typical of the holders of false beliefs.

Someone who is simply ignorant knows that they are ignorant, and will likely be humble, open to learning, and not arguing with falsehood, unlike someone who is compoundedly ignorant; this person does not know they are ignorant, thus they often are arrogant about learning and following the truth because they believe they are already knowledgeable.

Those with simple ignorance do not know the truth, and they generally neither support nor oppose it, while those with compounded ignorance believe they are guided but are actually misguided; they oppose the truth and contest it.

Understanding this is important to differentiate in your dialogues between the two types and to recognize where the flaw in thinking originates.

15. Being biased against the truth is ugly, and commendable stances should not merely be reactive. Moderation in love and hate, praise and blame, is a virtue.

16. Every rule has exceptions; do not dismiss the rule because of an exceptional example.

Applying generalizations inappropriately is an error and dismissing a general rule because of an exceptional example is also an error; smoking is harmful, so do not dismiss this rule just because someone smoked and did not get sick!

Give the rule its due and place the exception in its actual context.

17. Do not fall into the repetition trap.

How many wrong ideas and judgments are repeated with the same or changed methods; and thus, with frequent repetition, falsehood becomes an unquestioned truth. This aligns with some

people's principle: "Lie repeatedly until people believe you!" This has no effect on the convictions of rational people; for them, repetition does not make an error correct.

18. The truth is bitter to those who are not refined. Arrogance, envy, following whims, tribal zeal, blind imitation, and extremism: these are among the greatest diversions from the truth.

19. There is a strong link between desires and doubts; few realize this!

20. The manner of the wise includes carefulness, thorough investigation, categorization, and not rushing to accept or reject opinions.

In contrast, the foolish act oppositely!

## Pieces of Advice Related to Insight in the Religion of Allah and Protection from Intellectual Traps Leading to Misguidance

### *Before you, fifteen pieces of advice:*

1. Guidance comes only through revelation, {And if I am guided, it is by what my Lord reveals to me} *[Saba': 50]*. Intelligence without divine assistance does not save from misguidance. People in their opinions are between divine assistance and abandonment; a man might be among the most intelligent, yet blind to the most obvious truths, and another might be dull yet guided to the disputed truth by Allah's permission, for there is no power or strength except with Him. Whoever relies solely on his intellect will be forsaken. Thus, the Prophet ﷺ often said: "O Turner of hearts, make my heart steadfast in Your religion." *[Tirmidhi 2140]*.

2. If the heart does not engage with the truth, it will engage with falsehood. The soul has a degree of arrogance and a tendency

to deviate from servitude, so be cautious and vigilant, break it with the whip of neediness, and remind it that the drink of desires is sweet, but it causes choking.

3. The closer the heart is to Allah, the more the obstacles of evil are removed, and the light of its truth recognition becomes perfect and strong. The farther it is from Allah, the more it is confronted with obstacles and its ability to discern correctly weakens {O you who have believed, if you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion} *[Al-Anfal: 29]*. Fear Allah, and you will be rightly guided.

4. The beginning of all types of misguidances stems from prioritizing personal opinion over revelation and choosing desires over Sharia. Salvation lies in seeking guidance, not in following desires. Desire is the opposite of truth, and it is the grazing field and playground of Satan; so, rid yourself of it {And do not follow the desires, lest they lead you astray from Allah's path} *[Sad: 26]*. Know that its paths are subtle, and safety from it is precious, for the soul dislikes to oppose it, although salvation lies in uprooting it; in desires lie disgrace and ruin.

***And nothing deters the insistent soul from desires,***

***except one whose judgment is resolute and complete.***

5. The mere occurrence of a doubt casting aspersion on the truth is not proof of its validity, and the eloquence in its formulation is not a sign of its truthfulness, and not knowing the answer initially is not evidence of its non-existence. If you face such a trial, hold firm, and do not weaken in the face of it.

6. Those who oppose the Quran and Sunnah and cast doubts on them are deviants at the beginning and end of their path. The issue with them is fundamental; they deviated and thus opposed. If they had sincerely turned to these sources initially,

they would have submitted and not objected; instead, they wasted precious life in vain, exhausted themselves, and confused others, losing the principles and thus the way, and turning away from the message, they fell into the wilderness of confusion and misguidance.

7. No one criticizes religious evidence unless the fault lies in their sick mind, not in the evidence itself. If you find religious evidence confusing and your understanding rebuffs it, know that it is due to its greatness and nobility that it eludes you, and beneath it lies a treasure of knowledge that you have not yet been given the key to. Ask for the teaching of Ibrahim to teach you and the understanding of Solomon to enlighten you, be sincere in your intentions, seek knowledge from its sources, and you will reach the cure for your blindness, {And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good} *[Al-'Anbkabut: 69]*.

8. Enemies of the messengers in every time and place inspire each other with deceptive eloquence, so do not be surprised by their coalition, nor be intimidated by their knowledge.

9. Allah loves from His servant knowledge and certainty, not ignorance and doubt, which cause extreme pain to the heart. The effective remedy is acquiring knowledge and the means of certainty.

10. Doubt is a disease, and exposing oneself to this disease is a significant risk. Swimming in the depths of seas is only for those fully qualified. Do not hover around the prohibited and seek safety and beware of taking risks; for nothing equals the safety of your religion, {And when you see those who engage in *[offensive]* discourse concerning Our verses, then turn away from them until they enter into another conversation. And if Satan causes you to forget, then do not sit after the reminder with the wrong-doing people} *[Al-An'am: 68]*.

11. Extremism in relying on intellect is the basis of misguidance. Allah gave us intellect to perceive what is near, not what is far, granted it to connect us to Him, not to sever us, to indicate His power, not to mislead from His wisdom.

12. There is no contradiction between what is authentically transmitted and what is clearly rational. Those who delve into rational matters and distinguish between clear proofs and doubts will see that clear reason is highly consistent with what the Prophet ﷺ brought.

13. Knowing the truth is sufficient to recognize the falseness of what opposes it, {So what is after the truth except error?} *[Yunus: 32]*. Do not aspire to know the answer to every doubt; this is unattainable as there is no limit to the whims that souls can generate. It is enough to know the truth through its evidence to be certain that what opposes it is false. We generally know that everything against revelation is false, and the details of such falsehood are known to some and not to others; ignorance of them harms nothing, and those more familiar with the corruption of falsehood are better acquainted with the validity of the truth.

14. There is a difference between what is inconceivable to the intellect and what challenges the intellect. It is necessary to distinguish between what the intellect cannot comprehend and what the intellect knows to be impossible; between what the intellect does not know to be true and what it knows to be false. The prophets, peace be upon them, may inform us about things that challenge the intellect, but they do not inform us about what is inconceivable to the intellect.

15. Adhering to the path of the predecessors is a safeguard against deviation, and blessings are found with the elders (those firmly grounded in knowledge).

## Final Advice

After Allah facilitated for us this journey through the previous chapters on the pathways of thought, its problems, and challenges: We turn to Allah the Almighty with praise, and we ask Him, exalted is He, to make this discourse beneficial for both its writer and its reader.

I find no better advice than to remind you of His words at the end of Surah al-Rum: {So be patient. Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth. And let not those who are unsure deter you} *[Al-Rum: 60]*.

Indeed, those who lack certainty and patience are frivolous and rash, swayed by whims and desires as the wind plays with light objects.

How much does a Muslim in this era need to make this verse the constitution of his life?

"Be perceptive and patient"... This is the message of the pages before you and its essence; its chapters are but detailed stops with the verse, drawing from its source, and advising with its guidance: a call for patience in truth, advice for steadfastness upon it, and enlightenment about the methods of the doubters who divert from certainty, those who seek discord and invert realities, striving with every trick, and obstructing every path.

So be perceptive and patient... Persist in what you are commanded to believe and act upon, for the one with certainty is stable; indeed, the promise of Allah is true, the meeting with Him is near, and what you have forwarded will not be lost, and he who fulfills will find the fullest reward!

The perceptive and patient one: is clear about his Lord, not provoked by the falsifiers, nor made trivial by those who lack

certainty; he continues on his path of migration to his Lord, unconcerned about them and not looking back.

And he whose patience and certainty are weak: these people provoke and belittle him, confuse matters for him, and pull him in, making him like them, doubtful and suspicious; he loses certainty; thus, he suffers a manifest loss; and Allah is the one from which to seek help.

O Allah, grant Muslims—young and old—the perception in their religion and steadfastness upon it, and protect them from the misleading trials...

***O Lord, keep them from paths that led astray...***

***that send their travelers to the fires' sway.***

***O Lord, guide them with revelation's light...***

***so, they reach You and win paradise's sight.***

***O Lord, be their ally and helper strong...***

***shield them from the deceiver's misleading wrong.***

***And support them, O Lord, with the truth You've revealed...***

***O Sender of the Quran, their fate is sealed.***

Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from Your presence; indeed, You are the Giver.

And praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.